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# THE WORKS

OF

# VICESIMUS KNOX, D.D.

WITH A

## BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN,
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PERSONAL NOBILITY.

SPIRIT OF DESPOTISM, AND ANTIPOLEMUS.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

# CHARLES JAMES FOX.

SIR,

WHEN I think of Personal Nobility, the title of my book, I am led, by a very natural association of ideas, to think of you.

The noble stand you lately made in favour of peace and liberty, when popular clamour—the "civium ardor prava jubentium"—would have drowned the voice of a less able advocate, when your standard was deserted by many who shrunk from your side in the hour of danger, has placed your name higher than it ever yet stood, among independent Englishmen, in the middle ranks, who neither enjoy nor expect the favours of ministerial influence. If you have lost a few valuable friends within the walls, you have gained the esteem of tens of thousands on the outside, who, before this test, had no just idea of the purity and intrepidity of your public virtue.

In search of a living example of eloquence, generosity, and unshaken perseverance in disinterested



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conduct, to enforce the precepts of the following Letters to a young Nobleman, I could find none more brilliant than your own, especially since, forsaken by some of your auxiliaries, you have stood the more illustriously conspicuous, IPSE AGMEN, in the front of the battle.

My praise can add nothing to your glory. But permit me to adorn my own pages with a name, which is of late more than ever illustrious in the eyes of all who, though attached to the forms, are yet more firmly attached to the spirit of the constitution.

I am,
Sir,
Your most humble Servant,
V. KNOX.

TUNBRIDGE,
*January 24, 1793.*

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# PREFACE.

It appears to me, that ancient learning is not sufficiently attended to in the education of modern nobility; and that the honour of an order, so highly privileged, cannot be more effectually promoted, than by a return to that truly classical mode which prevailed among the great in the reign of Elizabeth, and produced a manliness of mind, which caused the English character more nearly to resemble the Roman, than at any subsequent period of our history.

I have, therefore, recommended to my noble scholar, an early and attentive study of the poets, orators, and historians, of ancient Greece and Rome; I have advised him to imitate them in his compositions and eloquence, and to catch their generous spirit, while he emulates the vigour of their style.

Not only talents and superior knowledge are required in hereditary lawgivers, in men distinguished from their birth by titles, and claiming respect from their cradle, but public spirit, generosity, and nobility of mind; such as an imitation of the ancients in the purest ages is best adapted to promote. Pensions, places, titles, ribands, and all the mysteries of corruption, were then unknown, and virtue was nobility.

Modern meanness, mixed with pride founded in pedigree alone, though traced up to Adam, will be despised in every country on the face of the earth, once blest with light and liberty. The sun of knowledge is ascending, and, as it rises, the mists of prejudice disperse. Visions, which appeared solid and substantial, when seen at a distance and through

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the medium of a fog, now vanish into air, and the gaping spectator laughs at last at his own delusion.

The sun of knowledge, high above the horizon, not only gilds the tops of the mountains, but shines in the low valley. Indeed, the valley is often irradiated with the sunbeams, while the hills are enveloped in mist. A mediocrity of knowledge is diffused throughout all ranks of society; at least an ability and opportunity of obtaining with ease competent information. The lowest of the people can read; and books adapted to the capacity of the lowest of the people, on political and all other subjects, are industriously obtruded on their notice. The newspapers communicate the debates of opposing parties in the senate; and public measures (once confined to a conclave) are now canvassed in the cottage, the manufactory, and the lowest resorts of plebeian carousal. Great changes in the public mind are produced by this diffusion; and such changes must produce public innovation. Revolutions, unparalleled in history, have already happened on a large portion of the globe's surface; of which no human foresight can predict the remote consequences. All that wisdom can do, is to render the rising generation qualified to improve the vicissitudes which may happen, so as to promote the happiness of man in society, without partially consulting the exclusive privileges, or the oppressive superiority, of any single order.

Our own country is already a country of liberty. We enjoy, or may enjoy, by our happy form of government, as established at the Revolution, that freedom, to obtain which other countries are convulsed. We want only a restoration of the primitive principles of our constitution. The old building is strong and venerable, but in part decayed. No honest and independent man will refuse to cooperate in its repair. It is not so far dilapidated as to require demolition; but many stones are mouldered,

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that must be replaced with Purbeck; many timbers rotten, which must be renewed with heart of oak.

They who deny that the parliament wants reform, are of that description of men, who, like some noisome insects, can only subsist in corruption. They feed and fatten in filth, and cleanliness is their bane. And here I cannot but animadvert on those, who stigmatize all who wish to reform the most manifest abuses in the constitution of the senate, as its enemies; and would proscribe them under invidious names, basely thrown out to provoke the multitude against them. Who is the best friend of the sick man, the venal practitioner, who treacherously protracts the disorder for the sake of fees, and the lucre of vending his medicines; or the honest and liberal physician, who restores him to health, regardless of his private interest, with all possible expedition? Those calumnies against the best friends of the state, which endeavour to expose them to public resentment, as its enemies, will in time be treated with general indignation. The torrent of self-interest and timidity, rushing on to the dead lake of despotism, will soon be stemmed by the spirit and vigour of a people, whose history evinces, that however they may be overwhelmed by artifice for a time, they will emerge at last to light and liberty. There is in freeborn men a native elasticity, which will throw off every superincumbent weight, not imposed with their own concurrence, or submitted to from conviction of expediency. Coercion, whether from the ruling powers, or from a party or faction among themselves, will not be long borne by a whole people, unless, like the strait-waistcoat to the lunatic, it is necessary, in a morbid state, to their speedy convalescence. But who shall judge of the insanity? —A partial few, interested in the lunatic's confinement?

The general voice will be one day clamorous, though now overawed to whispers, for a reform of parliament. But when a reform of parliament is

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mentioned, it means not the house of commons only. The house of lords must reform itself, by training up a rising generation of patriots, with hearts inclined, and understandings enlightened, to pursue and accomplish whatever is best calculated to promote the happiness of a nation, of which they are born legislators. Can he be noble, who, in his sordid attention to borough elections, forgets what he owes to his country, what he owes to human nature?

The abolition of Nobility in France naturally excites some degree of alarm in England. The alarm, perhaps, is most concealed by those who feel it most; by those who affect contempt, while they burn with anger. The examples of two empires like America and France, a great portion of the inhabited globe, cannot but operate powerfully on the mind of neighbouring nations; on patricians and on plebeians; on those who fear, and on those who hope. Discussions are already begun on subjects which once were thought, like the holy of holies, too sacred to be entered upon by the profane. If the alarm, which has been founded, be just, the friends of the constitution, and the favourers of Nobility, will labour to render the one pure, and to preserve the other in its degree of due estimation, that they may both be retained amid the convulsion of neighbouring states; retained inviolate, for their evident utility in promoting the general happiness of man in society, and the welfare of this country. To prove their evident value and utility, and to restore them to their native dignity in the public esteem, will be to support them better than by levying legions of soldiers. Build them on any other foundation than public conviction of their real use and value, and like the house of the fool founded on the sand, they will one day fall, beaten down by the rains and winds of popular commotion.

To preserve the lustre of nobility unsullied, is the scope of the following pages. The lower orders of mankind have made wonderful advances in know-

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ledge; I wished the higher to make a proportionable progress, and to preserve a due interval, by a pre-eminence of real excellence; by a nobility of virtue and merit, superadded to the nobility of civil institution.

The times certainly require great wisdom and great virtue in all who take the lead in administration, or in a salutary opposition to it. He, therefore, who recommends to the great the study of models best calculated to form the understanding, and to infuse a taste for that sublime of public virtue which soars above self-interest, is most effectually serving his country; he is sowing the seeds of plants, whose foliage may adorn and shelter the land; he is raising a future generation of HAMPDENS, SIDNEYS, CHATHAMS; he is providing a succession of FOXES, GREYS, and LANSDOWNES.

The noble stand made by a few independent peers for the liberty of man, the liberty of thought and speech, and the liberty of the press, on which it must ever depend, retrieves the credit of a venal age, and recalls ideas of Roman magnanimity. The tide of corruption flowed strong and full against them; but they stood their ground, despising danger, and pitying that weakness of the multitude, which rendered them, during a temporary mania, the dupes of placemen, pensioners, expectants, dealers in boroughs, and factors of corruption.

The encouragement indeed of the late associations in every little corner of the kingdom, though apparently adverse, is, perhaps undesignedly, favourable to the cause of liberty. It calls thousands and tens of thousands, in all ranks, from their indolent repose, to the investigation of political subjects. It awakens them to political life, and prompts them to read forbidden books of which they had scarcely heard the names before. It makes them feel their own weight, and will teach them to throw it into the opposite scale, when they find themselves deluded by their artful leaders; or when their artful leaders, dis-

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appointed in the hopes of reward for their present exertions, shall excite them on some future panic, to associate in opposition. This step may be said in some respect to resemble the calling forth the notables in France, and declaring the legislative and executive powers incompetent, without extraneous assistance. Is not this to sap the constitution, or to proclaim its imbecility and decrepitude? And are such associators friends, and the only friends to their country?

The truth is, that the people themselves are at this moment the best friends to the constitution, as consisting of king, lords, and commons: they wanted no associations to threaten them with prosecution; they were loyal from affection and from conviction; and, if any individual violated the law, punishment was certain; for the law retains all its vigour, and justice is administered with the purity of Heaven's tribunal. The people heard insurrections announced; but they looked, and, lo! all was peace. The insurrections, which were intended to strike a panic, resembled, in the circumstance of their reality, the ghost of Cock-lane, at which the whole nation from one extremity to the other was once unaccountably alarmed. Truth brought her torch; the ghost vanished; and the people laughed at their own credulity!

Men who dare to come forward in the moment of political frenzy, to oppose its extravagance, and to check that intemperate zeal, which, in its fear of republicanism, seems willing to rush into the extreme of despotism, are truly noble, and therefore worthy of being pointed out as patterns to the young aspirant at personal nobility. They afford an example of that greatness of mind, the only foundation of true grandeur, which the precepts of this book are intended to inspire.

Many enter into opposition as an adventure; they bring a certain quantity of ability and influence into the market, which is to be bought up, when it

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appears worth while, by those who possess patronage and the command of a treasury. But men who continue firm in their opposition, in their defence of general liberty, when their prospect of personal emolument is forlorn, when reviled by cabals, and when deserted by their adherents, are of that description who founded noble families; themselves, though untitled, the noblest of the human, as well as of their own, race. The army of Xerxes consisted of myriads; yet Leonidas comprised, in his firm, united, little band, more true spirit, more genuine nobility, than the swarms of an oriental despot.

To the Constitution of England, to its spirit, which is its essence, those who have thus stood forth are true friends. They have a great stake in the country, though not the stake of places and pensions. They have well-grounded hopes of being rewarded with its honours. They only wish to restore it to its first principles, that they may retard its decay, and build the fine pile of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, on marble columns, instead of posts crumbling with putrefaction. I avow myself with them, (though the avowal is, I own, unimportant,) a sincere lover of a government so supported; and am happy, however feeble my aid, to cooperate with their generous efforts. I have, with this view, attempted, in the following pages, to add to the personal merit of the aristocracy.

If I lean to liberty, I glory in it. I lean to that which every independent mind must love. He who is cordially attached to letters, will probably be attached, with peculiar affection, to liberty; for liberty is the friend of literature, as well as of every thing beautiful and honourable. Tyranny hates it. Tyranny has commonly been ignorant. Tyrants over men, and slaves to their own passions and caprice, have usually been brought up in illiterate voluptuousness; and seem, like the poor savages of some desert isle, to hate letters and sciences, merely because they are strangers to them. Weak eyes



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shrink from a strong light. But as light is indisputably to be preferred to darkness, so is even democracy to despotism. Ignorant despotism presiding over an enlightened people, is no less ridiculous than detestable; but ignorant it has usually been, and supported merely by brute force, by an ignorant and mercenary army.

The prevalence of systematic corruption in a state, is inimical not only to liberty, but to personal merit in every department. It discourages the rising race in their attempts to excel, when they see the rewards of excellence bestowed only where borough or election influence points out the favoured candidate. When the best emoluments in the church, in the law, in the army, in the navy, are reserved to secure implicit votes in favour of corruption, what is there to stimulate to high excellence in the liberal professions, but the pure love of excellence for its own sake, which operates only on a few of nobler dispositions than are possessed by the generality? What is there to cherish in the state that root of nobility, from which the branches, which now flourish from its vigour, chiefly derive their bloom and fruit? And is it not a fact too notorious to be controverted, that besides the public purse, all the douceurs in all the professions are scarcely sufficient, in our unreformed state, to satisfy the cravings of voracious corruption?

But though a senatorial reform is most devoutly to be wished, yet the unreformed state is to be preferred, with all its evils, to continued violence, rapine, bloodshed, and universal confusion. Let reason, not force, triumph. Though her conquest over prejudice be slow and gradual, it is ultimately sure. The tree of liberty is planted already in England. May the mossy concretions be rubbed off its branches, and the thorns and briars removed which impede its vegetation! I would plant by its side the tree of peace, the fruitful olive. May they both flourish together, watered by the dew of Heaven, comforting the people with their shade, and enrich-

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ing them to their heart's content by an abundant fertility!

Peace is the chief good of a commercial, and indeed of every people. European nations, with all their improvements in civilisation, are still too near the savage state, while they terminate their contests by war. Nothing but self-defence can justify it. And if those who decree that it shall take place, under any circumstances but the necessity of self-defence, were compelled to go into the field in person, it is probable that national disputes would be settled by the arbitration of neutral powers, and the sword converted into the ploughshare. To avoid war, the sorest calamity of human nature, should be the chief object of every humane man, and wise minister. If war at all times is to be shunned, it is more particularly at this time, when ill success may probably cause that anarchy and confusion, which has yet existed among us in idea only. When taxes shall be enormously increased, (as they must be in a war of this character,) many, it is to be feared, will desert the standard to which they have lately crept with blind servility, and rally round the torch of discord.

True patriotism, such as, regardless of party, and of all selfish views, contemplates events, in which the happiness of a future generation may be endangered, and by which the happiness of the living race must be destroyed, will labour to avoid war, by which nothing really valuable can be gained, and every thing may be lost. It will not sacrifice internal happiness like ours to punctilio. It will not wantonly interfere in the concerns of foreign nations. It will not gratify even national pride at the expense of national felicity. To excite such patriotism, I have endeavoured to form a virtuous Patrician, whose mind is enlarged by the most valuable knowledge, and whose heart is softened by religion and humanity; whose spirit is no less elevated above the ordinary level of mankind, than his civil rank in

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society. The moral architect who builds a man—great from internal qualities—good at heart—meaning nothing but what is generous and beneficent, and able to accomplish his purposes—is surely as well employed as he who forms a heap of stones into a palace, however beautiful in its symmetry, or magnificent in its size. As mind is superior to matter, so is a really great man more noble than the sublimest inanimate productions of art or of nature. To be the humblest labourer in erecting such an edifice, is an honourable employment.

If zeal in a good cause has led to any ardour of expression, I trust I shall need no pardon. I have no sordid interest to serve in what I have done. I have not been obsequious to power. I have nothing to ask of it, nothing to expect from it, and from the candid judgment of the public I have nothing to fear. I have employed my literary leisure in a way that I thought might be useful; and if one idea only is serviceable to the country, it will be acknowledged as meritorious, when the temporary prejudices of party shall be lost in the radiance of eternal truth.

I am attached to the king and to the lords; but I am more attached to the commons; and I will adopt the saying of Rumbald in the reign of Charles the Second, as recorded by Burnet: "I do not imagine the Almighty intended, that the greatest part of mankind should come into the world with saddles on their backs and bridles in their mouths, and a few ready booted and spurred to ride the rest to death."

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# PERSONAL NOBILITY:

OR,

# LETTERS

TO A

# YOUNG NOBLEMAN.

## LETTER I.

My Lord,

I congratulate you on your determination to adorn the lustre of your birth by the accomplishments of elegant literature. The eagerness with which you solicit my correspondence is a compliment to me, and a proof of your own ardour in the pursuit of improvement. You need not doubt my compliance. It will be a pleasing amusement in my retreat, to contribute to the embellishment of a mind like yours; no less ennobled by a disposition to every generous virtue, than by a long line of illustrious ancestors.

You have already made, under your excellent tutor, an uncommon proficiency in those grammatical and elementary studies, which, however unostentatious in their appearance, are necessary to form a solid basis for a durable and beautiful superstructure. Proceed in your conquests; but take care to preserve the territory already subdued. Be not afraid of literary labour. At your age, you have health and strength enough to support a great deal, without



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the least detriment to your constitution, and with a certainty of pleasure and profit in return.

I admire that prudence which induces you to employ the valuable years of youth in useful and honourable studies, rather than in frivolous occupations; such as too often engross the minds of young men at your age, and in your elevated station. But forgive the caution of a friend. I dread the effects of example. Can you withstand the shafts of ridicule? For though your conduct will be esteemed by all men of sense and virtue, yet it will be derided by fops, gamesters, and professed men of pleasure.

Arm yourself, my Lord, with all your manly resolution on first entering into life. Your sense and accomplishments, seconded by courage in steadily pursuing the right path which you have chosen, will awe the weak and the vain to silence; and, in time, convert their contempt into esteem.

In the mean while, your sun will be rising gloriously in the horizon; and their feeble luminaries declining in clouds and darkness, to rise no more. You will soon become an important character, while they are sinking into insignificance. Your birth and fortune will indeed give you civil rank; but your attainments and your conduct will give you, what is better, the weight of personal authority. Both united must render you what every nobleman should ambitiously desire to be, an ornament to your country and to human nature.

But I know your liberal spirit, and trust to it. You want not the exhortations which my zeal has suggested. You have often expressed your scorn of being indebted to accidental nobility alone for personal distinction. May the ardour of virtue which irradiates the morning of your life, glow intensely at its noon, and add warmth and lustre to its even-

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ing! Thus while you live, you will be honoured; and at that day, when all human grandeur must be levelled to the earth, adorned with a better ornament than an escutcheon.

Forgive the zeal of friendship even when intemperate. My future letters shall be principally on subjects of polite literature, useful science, or the means of supporting the true dignity of a British nobleman.

I may indeed touch on politics; for they are the peculiar study of a British peer. But my politics are not the politics of a faction or a venal court. They are the politics of philanthropy. The solid happiness of all human creatures, high as well as low, and low as well as high, is their object. To that happiness civil liberty is essential. I mean liberty restrained by reason, by humanity, by justice, by a love of peace and a love of order. I am, &c.

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## LETTER II.

My Lord,

You desire me to give you an account, both critical and biographical, of the ancient classics. It would be easy to do it; for the materials are redundantly copious. But it has been done so often, that the task becomes irksome from repetition.

Give me leave to refer you for information to the Lives usually prefixed to the editions of the Classics, Greek and Latin, to Fabricius's Bibliothecæ; to Kennet's Lives of the Greek Poets; to Crusius's, of the Latin; and to Spence's Polymetis.

The minds of the first restorers of learning were so captivated with the beauties of the ancients, that they directed their whole labour and learning to



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their illustration. The consequence is, a mass of materials which has been accumulating to this hour; and which has a tendency to satiate by its copiousness, and to disgust by its perpetual similarity.

It is certainly right to acquaint yourself with the life, manners, and character of an ancient or a modern author, if practicable, before you undertake to read him. But I advise you not to dwell, as many have done, upon preliminary discourses and marginal notes, so much, as to leave little time and attention for the composition itself, the grand object of all; by which alone the author has survived the wreck of time, and for which alone it is thought worth while to inquire into his history, to write comments on him, or to introduce him to notice with prefatory dissertation.

From those books which I have already mentioned, you will derive as much knowledge as you will require in this department; unless you should make literary history a favourite and peculiar study. It is indeed a very entertaining study; and in the course of correspondence, I may sometimes take the liberty of giving you some hints upon it. But I think you may acquire all the biographical knowledge of the old classics, which you will at present want, from an occasional inspection of the obvious authors whom I have recommended. Indeed I have no great pleasure in mere translation, or in transcription; and I am unwilling to offer a dish to your Lordship, which has been so often hashed in every mode, that the most ingenious cookery can scarcely give it a new flavour.

So much has been done in the illustration of the classics, that little room is left for useful addition. Our forefathers have cleared the country, and levelled and illuminated the roads; but let not the facility of

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travelling unnerve our resolution, or lull us to an indolent and inglorious repose. I am, &c.

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## LETTER III.

My Lord,

As a vague and desultory study in youth contributes chiefly to amusement, I must intreat you to avoid the habit of it at present, and to form a plan and fix a scope.

It is, my Lord, your duty to be a politician. But I wish you to be a politician in the most extensive sense: one who sincerely loves his country, understands its real interest, and has judgment and spirit to promote it. Under the idea of a politician, in your Lordship's rank and station, I comprehend the knowledge and the liberality of a true philosopher.

Your desire, you tell me, is, to lead an honourable life, adorned with the lights of learning; to attain a pure and elegant style in writing and conversation, and a commanding eloquence in the senate.

Let this then be your scope; and let all your efforts in study have a reference to it. The character is so great to which you aspire, that there is scarcely any part of science and polite learning, which is not in some degree conducive to it.

But the multitude of objects which requires your attention, renders it necessary to form something of a plan. I do not mean a strict and inflexible rule, which tends rather to shackle, than to facilitate the movements of the mind; but I mean such a system of application, as may guide without painful restraint, and govern steadily, yet without the severity of unrelaxing despotism.

A thousand circumstances must arise, which may

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render a temporary deviation from a plan of study, far more conducive to the end, than an inviolable adherence to it. Throughout life we are often governed by unavoidable circumstances; and he that would conduct himself entirely by rule in little as well as great matters, must retreat from society; must live alone in the world, and out of the reach of its wonderful vicissitudes.

A plan of study is chiefly useful in pointing out a return to the right way, after we have been forced by circumstances to desert it. It may be compared to a great turnpike-road leading to the place of the traveller's destination. He may frequently find out a shorter, or a pleasanter path; but he is in no danger of losing himself, while he keeps in view the highway, proceeds in a line nearly parallel, and knows how to return to it when danger or difficulties occur.

Many severe students in the universities have prescribed to themselves a plan of study, in which the business of every hour of the day has been scrupulously allotted. But I never heard that they arrived at any great superiority over those who allowed themselves a little latitude. The mind, especially when enlivened by genius, loves its liberty; and roves with delight, like the bee, in search of flowers of its own undirected choice.

I suspect, my Lord, that they knew but little of the human mind, who supposed it capable of making a successful transition from one study to another, during eight or ten hours of the day, by the sound of the clock. I am of opinion that the abrupt dereliction of a subject, in which the attention is deeply engaged, to enter on another directed by a written plan, would often be found no less injurious than unpleasant.

Indeed, though many have begun to study in the

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trammels of severe method; yet few, I believe, have continued it long, or felt it on experience beneficial.

What is done well, is usually done with pleasure, and from choice. Restraint is in its nature irksome to the free-born mind. It is only to be imposed where the utility compensates the pain. I shall therefore never recommend it to you when it is unnecessary. Obey the impulse of the moment, even if the object to which it leads is but collaterally connected with your principal scope.

You perceive, therefore, that the plan which I advise is liberal. I hope that you will find it agreeable; and, without unnecessary pain in the pursuit, arrive at the excellence you desire.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER IV.

My Lord,

Your lordship expressed a wish in your last letter, that I would be more explicit on the plan which I advised you to pursue. I am happy in finding you desirous of information, and wish it may be in my power to offer such as you may experience to be truly useful.

I think it right, my lord, to lay the foundation of your future improvements, in that kind of elegant and pleasing learning, which the French call the Belles Lettres; the English, classical learning; and the ancients, the studies of humanity. You have already made a very considerable progress in this department under your tutor. But it must be confessed, that you have read the classics hitherto, rather for the sake of acquiring the ancient languages, and exemplifying the rules of grammar, than

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of refining your taste, and of extending your knowledge of life and manners.

You will do right to re-peruse the most celebrated of the classics with more liberal views. Procure the best *variorum* editions of them all, for the sake of referring to them when difficulties arise. Begin with Virgil, and read him in the edition of Heyne. Do not trouble yourself at first with the *variantes lectiones*, nor with all those discourses which the ingenious editor entitles *excursus;* but read all his notes at the bottom of the pages. They will give you a just idea of Virgil's excellence, in many passages where the beauties may at first not strike your taste. Finish all the works of Virgil, before you enter on any other classic. You will soon read him with interest; which is seldom the case when a classic is read chiefly to analyze the construction, in short interrupted portions, as at school, or under a private tutor.

From thus studying and relishing Virgil, you will receive an improvement in your taste, which will enable you to discover those charms which captivate the classical reader in all the celebrated authors of the Augustan age.

Let Homer's Iliad be read immediately after Virgil's Æneis. Read him without notes; for no author writes more perspicuously, and notes only distract attention when they are not necessary. Read him in the Oxford edition, without a Latin translation; having at the same time, in a separate volume, a Latin translation to refer to occasionally; and to save the trouble of turning over a lexicon. After a careful reading of the two or three first books, you will find little difficulty in the language. The few that may arise, will be easily removed by the translation. I wish you could proceed entirely without a

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translation; but as this is more perhaps than I ought reasonably to expect, I recommend one, merely to avoid the toil of turning over the lexicon. Not that I think the toil useless; but I fear it will be more troublesome than you will choose to submit to, especially as editions with literal translations abound, in which the meaning of every word is accurately discovered with little labour.

By an attentive perusal of Virgil and Homer, you will not only have acquired a perfect acquaintance with those first-rate writers, but at the same time a great knowledge of mythology, and of that poetical history which tends to facilitate the study of the classics of all ages and all countries. Other authors are to be read indeed in due order, but Virgil and Homer should be first digested. They will furnish a solid corner-stone for the future edifice, however massy or magnificent the design. Not to weary or alarm you with requiring too much at once, I shall pursue the subject in subsequent letters, if, amid your other employments, you deem what I have already proposed, not impracticable.

But lest you should think that I have lost sight of the plan of which I spoke, I must remind you that the Belles Lettres constitute the first part of it. It will be followed by logic, ethics, metaphysics, physics, mathematics, history, philosophy, and general literature. I am, &c.

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## LETTER V.

My Lord,

The authors whom, at this period of your studies, I next recommend to your most attentive re-perusal are, Horace, Cicero, and Demosthenes. Choose

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Baxter's edition of Horace, with the improvements of Gesner. The notes are short; but so much the better, since they are in a high degree ingenious, learned, and illustrative. I know you have read Horace, as well as Virgil and Homer, under your tutor; but read him again, in this your recapitulating and Voluntary course. He is the poet of gentlemen, and men of the world. You cannot read and taste his beauties, without improving your urbanity of manners, together with your knowledge of polite literature.

The notes, commentaries, and illustrations of this most favourite author are, beyond all reasonable limits, voluminous. They would of themselves fill a large library. But, my lord, you have not time to read like a Burman and a Bentley; and I am not sure that you ought to lament it. The wheat which is to be found in the store-houses of such laborious scholars, is accompanied with abundance of chaff. They had great merit, and it is uncandid to detract from it. All I contend for is, and I conjecture it is not very necessary to contend eagerly, that your lordship should not devote much of your time to the reading of their dull notes. If you can understand and taste your author without them, it is enough; and I have no doubt but that you may understand Horace with Gesner, assisted occasionally by the Dauphin edition; and that you will taste him by your own discernment, and the observations you have already made on men and manners. Horace may be read rather as an amusement, than as a serious study. You may carry a little pocket edition about you, and read him at those intervals which no parsimony of time can ever preclude. Many a quarter of an hour passes tediously and unprofitably, which might be pleasantly and usefully employed in studying those

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elegant pieces which charmed a Mæcenas and an Augustus. There are editions of Horace that will take up less room in your pocket, than your morocco pocket-book and almanack.

But give me leave to lead you to a higher order. I feel a sentiment of reverence at the name of Cicero, and I wish to inspire you with the same. My Lord, he is a model, almost perfect, for an English nobleman. Before you enter upon his works, read his Life by Middleton; and dwell with particular attention on the last section of it, which delineates his character. Middleton himself is an excellent writer; formed on the style of him whose life he has exhibited. Detraction has indeed robbed Middleton of some of his honours, by denying the originality of his choice of citations; but whether this is well or ill founded, it very little affects the merit of his style as a classical composer.

I almost fear to recommend to your Lordship, the perusal of all that remains of Cicero, lest you should be dismayed at the nine quartos of Olivet. But yet I will venture to advise it, because I am convinced that it will be in the highest degree ornamental to your mind. It is true that some parts of Cicero, as well as of all other authors, are more worthy of your attention than others. His Book of Offices, and his Treatises on Old Age, on Friendship; his Dialogue on the Orator, his Brutus, his Orator, and his Letters, deserve to be made the companions of a student's life. They certainly contain the best sentiments of the human heart, in the best expressions of the style and language.

I shall reserve the subject of his Orations, and my recommendation of Demosthenes, to a future letter.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER VI.

My Lord,

I am aware that those who have assumed the office of recommending books to students, have erred greatly by exceeding all reasonable limits in the number which they have recommended. I am afraid you will begin to suspect that I shall fall into a similar mistake.

But, my Lord, I desire you to remember, through the whole of our correspondence, that I prescribe no rule of study, which may not be corrected and altered by those emergent circumstances which it is not possible to foresee.

From the great number of books which I must of necessity mention with praise, you will read only such as your time, well managed, will enable you; will select such parts of them as your own judgment shall point out as most useful and conducive to your purpose; or such as shall please your taste, and accord with your inclination.

When your inclination leans strongly to any author, read on, regardless of a plan; for whatever you read with appetite, will turn like food, to solid nourishment. Besides the pleasure of following inclination, in matters, not of the first moment, is a reason sufficient for complying with it.

Though the necessary modes of grammatical expression may lead me to speak in the imperative mood, yet I shall never assume the right of dictation. Your age and your parts justify you in thinking for yourself. I submit to you my ideas on the subject of your studies, at your own request, and with a desire

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to promote the purposes of an ingenious and virtuous mind like yours; but it will give me pleasure to find you improving and altering them, according to the suggestions of your own good sense, guided by emergencies and the opinions of others with whom you may converse.

Your situation in life requires action as well as contemplation. I do not wish to render you a walking library, a verbal critic, or a mere grammarian. But, in general, there is little danger of excess on the side of application to study. So many and powerful are the temptations to frivolity, that the danger is lest it should engross the mind, and preclude all attention to books, and all learning, useful and ornamental. I know your love of letters is ardent; but, at first entering into the world of fashion, there is reason to fear, that your earlier propensities may be superseded by others less laudable.

You will allow me therefore to prescribe such conduct and such studies, as I think best, and most conducive to your honour and happiness. If I recommend too much of any thing, attribute it to my anxiety for your welfare; but not to my ignorance of the difficulty you will be under, of doing or reading all that I may mention as worthy your attention and endeavour.

At the same time that I am ready to make all due allowance, and grant many indulgences; I cannot refrain from reminding you, that every man, especially every young and healthy man, like yourself, is able to read much more, than in the hour of timidity and indolence he is apt to imagine. To the persevering spirit of manly virtue and youthful ambition, there is scarcely any height which is too arduous for attainment. Be of good courage; and remember that by aiming at great things, you will certainly obtain

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much, though not all to which you aspire. How much wiser and nobler, than to shrink from the pursuit entirely, through a despair of reaching the highest pinnacle! I am, &c.

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## LETTER VII.

My Lord,

I reserved the subject of Cicero's Orations for a particular letter; because I consider all that is connected with oratory as particularly important to you, who intend not to pass your life in an ignominious ease, but in the pursuit of real honour, and the service of your country. You will soon be a member of the senate; and your friends will naturally expect to see the fruits of your study and genius richly displayed in parliamentary eloquence.

The world cannot afford you a better model than Cicero. But to receive all the benefit from his orations which they are able to afford, you must read them, not merely as a critic and grammarian, but with a particular view to improvement in oratory. You must enter into their spirit, be present at the scenes which occasioned them, analyze their method, and weigh their arguments in the scales of reason.

Begin with the oration for Milo. It is generally allowed to be one of the best; and as you may not have time to read all, it is advisable in the first instance, to secure an acquaintance with the most approved. You may indeed read the whole of the selection made for the use of the Dauphin, previously to any of the others; for to reject that, or any other common books, merely because they are common, is a proof of affectation and foolish conceit, rather than of

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good sense. I confess that the edition for the use of the Dauphin, is not in much esteem among the learned, and that it is calculated chiefly for learners; but it is an useful selection, and may very properly be read by you, as an introduction to the other orations. You will sometimes find a difficult passage, which the notes in this edition will usually illustrate. If they should not, pass it over, and read on without interruption. The difficulty will probably vanish at a second reading; or it may be removed by the assistance of an intelligent friend. At all events, let it not impede your progress, or cool the glow of animation which you may have caught, and which will conduce more to your improvement in eloquence, than the notes of all the commentators.

Though I wish you to make the works of Cicero your particular study, yet I cannot advise you to trouble yourself with more notes than those which are indispensably necessary to illustrate allusions to historical facts, to ancient laws, and to local practices and customs. The *Clavis Ciceroniana of Ernestus*, which you may procure in a separate octavo volume, will answer your purpose entirely. Let it always be at hand while you read Cicero. It is printed in the last volume of the Oxford edition; but it is cumbrous in a quarto size, and the labour of investigating words in an index, is sufficiently irksome, without the additional incumbrance of an unwieldy volume. You will remember at the same time, that I do not interdict your reading of any notes, if you should have time, and should take a pleasure in the learning and ingenuity which they often display. All I mean is, to express my opinion of the impropriety of diverting the attention which is due to an author, and which such authors as Cicero will amply reward, from the valuable text to the annotations, which are

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often of dubious authority, and expressed in dubious Latin. It has been justly observed, that many a celebrated ancient author, surrounded by a vast accumulation of comments, is scarcely seen, and resembles a little boat in the wide ocean, or a jewel lost in a dunghill. I wish, my Lord, to bring forward the author himself to your notice, to impress his words strongly on your mind, to tinge you with the colour of his style, and to work his sentiments into your bosom. Shall Grævius and Burmannus overwhelm Cicero in the mind of the reader, even while they are undertaking to illustrate him? Read the text, and trust while you read, to your own understanding. Grapple with your author by the exertions of your native vigour. Dare to enter the temple at once, without lingering in the porch. Life is too short, to spend any time in superfluous preparation.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER VIII.

My Lord,

Of the great number of Orations which Cicero delivered, fifty-nine are extant at this day; a number sufficient to furnish ample employment for the most diligent student of modern eloquence.

But I repeat my advice, that you should first read the best of them, and leave those which are not above mediocrity, or which at least are less celebrated than others, to the contingency of a future occasion. I have already recommended the Oration for Milo. You will read all that are contained in the Dauphin selection. But you will not be satisfied without reading that for Aulus Cluentius. In other orations, Cicero is said to have outdone others; in this, himself. The

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seven harangues on the famous business of Verres, and the fourteen against Anthony, will of course excite, as they will richly reward, your attention.

When you shall have read all these, with the assistance of Ernestus's indexes, I think you may be congratulated on your acquaintance with one of the greatest speakers and best men whom antiquity has produced. You will want no farther directions for the study of Cicero. You will have contracted an esteem for the man, notwithstanding his modern detractors, and a taste for his works, however neglected. You will, without my instigation, read the rest of his harangues at your leisure and from choice. Your improvement will infallibly be great and secure. Quintilian, a most judicious writer, has asserted, as you may remember, that he who is delighted with Cicero, may depend upon it, that he has made no small proficiency in the study of eloquence.

I know it has been the fashion to detract both from the moral and the literary character of Cicero: and indeed neither his life nor his writings are without the characteristics of humanity. He was sometimes too timid in his conduct, and too diffuse in his style. But, my Lord, his excellencies predominate in a more than common proportion; and his detractors have had chiefly in view, the attainment of distinction for themselves, by singularity of opinion, and the gratification of their pride, by pretensions to superior sagacity. I am, &c.

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## LETTER IX.

My Lord,

As oratory is very properly the object of your present studies, I must conduct you from Cicero to



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Demosthenes. You have Greek enough to read him, with very little assistance either from lexicons or translations. Condescend to resume, during your earlier studies, the edition which you used under your tutor. I think it was Mounteney's; in which, though there are but few orations, there are enough to give an appetite for more, and to lead you to the edition of Taylor.

Every common-place critic talks of the vehemence of Demosthenes; but vehemence alone is a slight recommendation of oratory. Vehemence is the quality which marks the rhetoric of a scold. You may hear it in great perfection in the streets and the market-places. The peculiar excellence of Demosthenes is a solidity of reasoning, expressed with a force of style; and both united, command assent and conviction. He fights with a weapon at once sharp, polished, and massy. It cuts like a two-edged sword, and falls with the force of a battle-axe. I will not however enter into a general encomium of an author whom all commend, and who is now seated in such eminent rank, that praise can no longer aggrandize, nor dispraise depreciate, his character.

But his beauties are not of that sort which display themselves on a cursory perusal. His solid ore must be dug for with persevering labour. I do not mean that his subject-matter is difficult of comprehension, for it was addressed to the lowest of the people; but the excellence of his diction cannot be understood by a modern, who is unacquainted with the curious art of the ancients, in the formation of their style. The nicety with which they examined the structure of sentences, exceeds all that the moderns ever attempted in studying the beauties of composition. Perhaps the inharmonious languages of the moderns cannot easily admit of it.

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I do not desire you at present to enter into the minute inquiries of a critical anatomist. But you will not taste the style of Demosthenes, till you shall have formed an idea of the ancient rhythmus, and tuned your ear to the finished periods of an Athenian orator.

I know not how this can be better effected, than by habituating yourself to pronounce aloud, whole paragraphs from the orations of Demosthenes, with all the fire and animation which you will feel from warmly entering into the cause. Pronounce them repeatedly in your study, till you perceive the full force and harmony of every period. Imitate the musician who practises a new piece of music till he discovers its excellence; not desponding because at first it presents nothing but discord, but persevering till he catches the very spirit and idea of the composer.

When you have discovered the proper pauses or *cæsuræ*, mark them with your pencil. Then observe how one part of a period corresponds with the other in beautiful proportion. You will thus not only feel the pleasure of his fine style, but see the cause of it, and become at once a judge and an artist. You will find that every word has its place, like the stones in a beautiful piece of architecture; from which, if it should be removed, the symmetry will be deranged, and the graceful result of the whole diminished or destroyed. Observe the same method in reading all authors who excel in style.

Read aloud, observing the rhythmus, and the close of every sentence. Let the groves of your father's park resound with Roman and Athenian eloquence; nor be afraid of disturbing the Dryads. The young men who make a figure nowhere but in the chase, at the gaming-table, and over the bottle, may call



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you mad, if they should overhear you; but time will discover that you were hunting nobler game than they knew how to pursue. What figure will they make in the house of lords, when every peer shall be hanging on your lips, and admiring in you, the sound philosopher, the intelligent statesman, and the nervous orator?

I have before hinted, that you must be well armed against the assaults of ridicule, if you aspire at uncommon excellence. The *knowing young men* have no weapon to assail you but ridicule.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER X.

My Lord,

After you shall have repeatedly read, marking the pauses, examining the rhythmus, and pronouncing aloud at least a hundred times over, the few orations of Demosthenes which Mounteney has edited; I would put into your hands, as a convenient book, the edition of Lucchesini, published in London by Allen. Go through it, in the same manner as you went through Mounteney's. You will indeed find the same orations inserted in it, as in Mounteney's; but you will also find seven or eight additional. Read them all. Pronounce them all with the strictest attention to time, and to those marks of your pencil, which I recommended before, and which I compare to bars, or to rests, in your music books.

Your ear will now be formed, and you will choose to proceed, for the pleasure of the progress, to the oration for Ctesiphon, published with the speech of Æschines against him, in the edition of Foulkes and Friend. You will be delighted with that celebrated

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contest. The oration of Æschines is admirable. How much more so, that of Demosthenes, which defeated it entirely, I hope your cultivated taste will now immediately perceive. Pay particular attention to the oration against Midias; for it is universally acknowledged to be a master-piece.

On this topic I need not urge you any further. You will eagerly purchase Taylor's Demosthenes, which, though left imperfect, is well worthy of your possession; and I think you will not rest satisfied without the edition of Wolfius, in three volumes in folio. Be not alarmed; I do not mean that you should read all the Orations; but I think you will choose to have them all in your collection, that you may refer to them as occasion or inclination may require.

In your letter, which I have just received, you mention Leland's translation of Demosthenes, and slightly hint, that you have read a few orations in it, without being impressed with that exalted idea of the original, which I have endeavoured to inspire.

To detract from established fame is invidious. Dr. Leland was a valuable man, and a good writer; but his translation of Demosthenes appears to be a feeble performance. I do not say that the meaning is not faithfully preserved; but I am of opinion, that the force and animation of the original style are not attained. Take care not to form your idea of authors from translations only. As to Leland, you may use his work by way of comment, where difficulties arise; or you may usefully run over an oration in English, previously to reading it in Greek, in order to obtain at an easy rate, introductory knowledge of the subject and the method. But I must apprise you that there is danger, when once you begin to use a translation, of never desisting from its use. It is a power-

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ful allurement to the indulgence of indolence; and how many apparent students are deceived by that syren; and listening to her voice, lose all their habits of industry, and with them all hope and chance of great improvement and intellectual pleasure!

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XI.

My Lord,

Your chief object in reading Demosthenes, is not merely a better acquaintance with the Greek language, but improvement in eloquence; by catching his fire, and imitating the force of his style and the strength of his reasoning, in your own future orations. Your principal attention is therefore to be paid to him as a fine writer, and a model of eloquence. But it is absolutely necessary to understand him fully as you proceed; and for this purpose, you must often have recourse to collateral and auxiliary information. Though clear and perspicuous in his style, yet in historical allusions, and legal practices, or customs, he cannot be completely understood without a commentator, or a perfect knowledge of the history of Athens during the short period of his political activity.

The perusal of the argument prefixed to every oration, will usually throw sufficient light upon it, to enable you to proceed with pleasure. But you will sometimes find it necessary to examine the Latin notes subjoined to Mounteney's, and those also in the second volume of Allen's edition. But never turn to them, unless when you cannot proceed without them. Many of Taylor's notes respect the state of the text, the different readings, the errors of copyists, with

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which, at present, you have no occasion to trouble yourself, since your object is not verbal criticism; but style, method, and argumentation. While you are glowing with the fire of Demosthenes, I should lament to see you benumbed, on a sudden, with a long account of various readings in a dozen manuscripts or printed copies. The other notes of that learned editor are well worth your attentive perusal.

You will read the Grecian history of the period at which your author flourished with peculiar attention. Add to it, the Life of Philip. And, if you have leisure, you may also have recource to Tourreil's celebrated French translation.

The valuable and curious account of Demosthenes, prefixed to the edition of Wolfius as a preface, will give you a complete idea of the character of Demosthenes, as it was conceived by the best judges of antiquity. And I refer you to it as to the fountain head of intelligence concerning Demosthenes, whence the moderns have chiefly derived those streams which they have abundantly diffused. There is, you will observe, a great deal to be read; but indeed it is worth the labour; for it contains much elegant and very interesting erudition. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XII.

My Lord,

One of our first objects, I have already said, is the study of rhetoric; but not by dry rules and technical terms. You study, a voluntary scholar, under such tutors as Demosthenes and Cicero. They have set you patterns; and you are to follow them not servilely, but with a generous emulation to reach their excellence in your own language, and to naturalize

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their beauty in your own country. Practice then, will promote your purpose far better than theory. Theory enough you will derive from an assiduous study of those orators, from whom the rhetoricians formed their rules; often giving the hard name of a figure, and the pompous appearance of art, to modes of thinking, and to forms of utterance, which were plainly the result of common sense, the sentiments and the language of nature.

The practice, or exercise, which I recommend, must consist of daily composition, and frequent recitation.

Choose any of the common topics of political or judicial debate, which may be agitated in England at the time you are exercising; and compose a speech with as much accuracy and resemblance to your model, Cicero or Demosthenes, as you are able. Compose not indolently, but with the utmost exertion of your genius. Endeavour to feel and think, just as if you were speaking at the bar, or in parliament, while all around you is wrapt in silence. I know there is some difficulty in working up your mind to such a pitch in the solitude of your library. But the power of a warm and lively imagination can overcome the difficulty. When you shall have written your harangue, speak it with all the vehemence, pathos, or elegant modulation, which the nature of the subject will admit. Write every day, and recite at least two or three times in the week, with the most earnest endeavours to excel.

I really believe, that a student may pour over the best treatises of rhetoric for seven years, and at last come forth as silent as a statue; while you, in this mode, that of imitating the best models, will be able in a little time, to speak well on every topic which may come properly before you.

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But when I advise your Lordship to cultivate oratory by practice rather than by rule, I do not mean to insinuate, that you must sit down in total ignorance of what the rhetoricians have been teaching mankind with so much parade. I earnestly recommend to you the reading of select parts of Quintilian. The whole of Rollin's edition will not, I think, be more than you may read with pleasure. Of this favourite author I shall say more in my next letter.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XIII.

My Lord,

So numerous have been the writers on the art of speaking, that, I dare say, a thousand books of rhetoric, of various kinds, and in various languages, might be recommended to your notice. If you can find time, you will receive much improvement from *Schellerus's Præcepta Styli benè Latini.* But I have pointed out a shorter way; and am sure you will think it a pleasanter. Whether it will be equally or more successful, depends upon your own ardour and perseverance.

But I recommended Quintilian; he is indeed a most excellent writer, and worthy of your study, for his goodness of heart, and his general good sense, independently of his instruction as a master of rhetoric.

As a master of rhetoric, he is the best qualified of any I know, to introduce you to a knowledge of the excellencies of Cicero and Demosthenes.

Always fearful of requiring too much, I do not recommend the whole of Quintilian's work, as it appears in the elaborate edition of Capperonnerius. That excellent didactic author, Rollin, has published

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a most agreeable abridgement. Procure a small Paris edition, to carry in your pocket. Contract an intimacy with Quintilian, and I will engage that you will love him as a friend, while you respect him as an instructor. From a frequent conversation with him, you will improve in good sense and sound reasoning, in taste, and in the art of just criticism.

He is sometimes a little difficult; but Rollin generally removes the difficulty, by short well-chosen notes, which afford much light, without consuming much time.

If I should tell you how greatly I admire Quintilian, you would attribute my praises to the prejudice of an unreasonable partiality. I have long made him my companion; and I know no author in didactics that equals the merit of Quintilian. If you anxiously desire improvement, read Quintilian repeatedly. I am sure I cannot give you better advice for the conduct of your studies in eloquence, after having endeavoured to secure your first attention to the great models, Cicero and Demosthenes. However paradoxical it may seem, I wish you to contemplate the great works of genius, before you study the minute rules of art; and to feel as nature dictates, before your ardour is cooled by technical theory.

You may wonder, perhaps, that I do not recommend the rhetoric of Aristotle. I leave it to your future studies, and to your own option. Aristotle wrote in a manner so dry and jejune, as disgusts and deters a young reader. I am far from meaning to detract from him; for I consider him as one who understood human nature better than most of the sons of Adam; and who derives the instructions he gives, from the study of man, and the anatomy of the heart. But he requires a reader of mature judgment, and that degree of improvement already obtained, which it is the business of a didactic author to produce.

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The rhetorical books of Cicero are also, like those of Aristotle, better adapted to the manly than the juvenile age; because they are in subtle dialogues; where erroneous opinions are maintained by some of the interlocutors with such ingenuity, as may deceive and mislead a young student, whose judgment is not confirmed by experience and reflection. They are however polite conferences; and well worthy of your perusal, for the elegance of their language, the urbanity of their manners, and the generosity of their sentiments. But the rhetorical instruction in them is too widely diffused, to be easily reduced to a clear and systematic form. It is justly observed by Rollin, that Quintilian unites the beauties of Cicero and Aristotle, without their abstruseness. He adorns the subtlety of the stagyrite, by introducing the flowers of Ciceronian eloquence; and while he entertains the young student with the charms of his style, he exercises the abilities of the profoundest scholar, by the solidity of his sense.

Quintilian and Cicero mutually reflect lights on each other.

Let Cicero, therefore, be your master, in style; and Quintilian, in the rules of rhetoric. Aristotle may remain on your shelves, till your own inclination shall prompt you to take him down. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XIV.

My Lord,

In the study of rhetoric, unlike a professor of anatomy, who presents to you a skeleton, rather than a beautiful living body, I advise you to contemplate

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the finished master-pieces of eloquence produced by genius, polished by art, and brought, as far as human nature will allow, to consummate perfection. The dry books of rhetoric which starve the genius by their meagre diet, I leave to students who talk of eloquence in the schools; but who will have no opportunity, as you will, of displaying it in the senate or at the bar. You, my lord, will spend your valuable time of preparation better than in talking *about it and about it.* You will imbibe as much of theory as is necessary, and no more; and then plunge into the practice. Have courage; and I venture to predict, that you will swim without corks, while the rhetoricians from the schools shall scarcely be able to keep their heads above water.

But if there is any author on the art of rhetoric less dreary than the scholastic rhetoricians, and you choose to read him, by all means pursue your inclination. If there is any rhetorician with the genius of an orator, I exhort you to study him; and what think you of Longinus? Panegyric has been lavish in his praise. But to speak the truth, I think you will learn more from his example than his precepts. He teaches little by rule; but his style is fine, his sentiments noble. Plotinus calls Longinus a philologer; not a philosopher. Longinus certainly bears no resemblance to Aristotle, and indeed very little to Quintilian. Read Longinus, as I have advised you to read Demosthenes, aloud; for he is in truth an orator, in the shape of a critic. Catch his spirit; and it will ennoble your eloquence, it will ennoble your heart, more than the blood of the Tudors. His treatise on the sublime, or rather on preeminent excellence, for so I might entitle it, is but short; and if you have a good appetite, you may devour and digest the whole in a fortnight.

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Mr. Toup's edition of Longinus, so far as concerns the state of the text, is far superior to that of Bishop Pearce. It was subsequent to it; and Mr. Toup, I believe, was a far better Greek scholar than the good bishop, whose merit, however, ought not to be lightly esteemed. The bishop's notes are well worth your attention; but read the text in Toup's edition. Remember my old and repeated advice. Let the text of your authors occupy the first and greatest share of your attention. Many scholars actually take more delight in the notes than the text; and seem to have forgotten their author, while they are immersed in the commentary. Pray beware of these Lethæan waters. The notes in Tollius's edition are too numerous, and frequently little to the purpose. Toup's and Rhunkenius's notes chiefly concern the correctness of the text, and the collation of manuscripts; and therefore, though very valuable, are not adapted to the nature of your lordship's liberal studies, which are to terminate in life and action, and not to be confined to the shade of a cloister. You will be thankful to the verbal critics for giving you a corrected text; but you will not trouble yourself about the means by which they were enabled to correct it. That was their affair, and they have discharged the duty faithfully. They have fully evinced their learning, ingenuity, and industry. The world knows their excellence; and you, my Lord, will, for the present, give them credit for it, without troubling yourself to examine the testimonies. Your business is with the master, and not with his servile retinue.

The English translation of Longinus by Dean Smith, has been in great repute. It is certainly the best translation of him in English; but I do not think your Lordship will be able to form from it a just idea of the animated style of Longinus. Besides, as the

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Dean was under the necessity of following Pearce's text, which is not very correct, he has in some places misrepresented Longinus, which he would not have done, had Mr. Toup's edition been published when he wrote.

I mention the imperfections of translations, chiefly to induce your lordship to have recourse to the originals; and not to acquiesce, through mere indolence, in a faint copy. And I do it the more solicitously, because many sensible men, who have forgotten their school attainments, contend, that to read the original languages is now an unnecessary trouble, and mere pedantry; since all that is valuable in them may be read more compendiously in excellent translations in our own language. I must not close my letter without desiring you to read, as a preparation for Longinus, the learned dissertation of Schardam prefixed by Toup to his edition. I regret that an edition from so accurate a critic, and from an university press, should not be free from gross typographical errata. You will be aware of them, and correct as you read. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XV.

My Lord,

Unwilling as I am to require more of you than your time will admit, I do not mention *Demetrius Phalereus*, and *Dionysius* of *Halicarnassus*, two other justly celebrated rhetoricians, as absolutely necessary to be read by you: but I recommend them as a very desirable part of your rhetorical studies, when opportunity shall enable you, and your inclination lead you, to study them with the attention they deserve.

The book of Dionysius the Halicarnassian, on the

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structure of words, is a most curious, ingenious, and instructive performance. Well understood and digested, it will enable your lordship to judge of style on solid principles, not merely by instinctive or improved taste, but with a critical knowledge of the cause of that excellence which you feel and admire. But as such treatises are rather apt to disgust young students, I willingly consent to your postponing them, till your own curiosity shall prompt you to examine their recondite doctrines. When you shall have read them, you will be a master, and no longer a scholar.

I am still of opinion, and I will repeat, that you will improve more by familiarizing your ear and understanding to the pure and finished orations of Cicero and Demosthenes, than by the best didactic teachers, ancient and modern. I have already recommended these authors with earnestness, and they may continue to be the study of your life, as well as of your earlier age.

But I should be guilty of a great omission, if I did not also recommend the study of those speeches, which the ancient historians have abundantly inserted in the course of their fine recitals.

There is an old collection of speeches, in folio, both from the Greek and Roman historians, which I wish you to procure. Read the most celebrated of them; never omitting the argument prefixed, without which you will often be involved in darkness, and lay aside the book in that disgust which arises from obscurity. The Latin part of this useful publication has been printed for the use of schools, in a small pocket volume, and, as a student of oratory, you cannot do better than make it a companion. If you were to learn a few of the short speeches by memory, and repeat them with emphasis as an exercise, you

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would inevitably catch a portion of the Athenian and the Roman fire. You will observe in them a wonderful variety of style, corresponding with the characters of the various speakers and writers; and you will discover beauties not at all inferior to those of Cicero and Demosthenes.

You will immediately see that most of the speeches are the compositions of the historians, and not of the personages to whom they are attributed. You will therefore justly expect to find in them all the excellencies of the finest writers, of Livy, of Sallust, of Tacitus. In the speeches you will see their general excellencies in singular perfection; for the historians certainly exerted the whole force of their genius in exhibiting the eloquence of their principal characters. The speeches are, in fact, in the best style of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus.

I think this exercise will be entertaining, and that you will pursue it from choice, after you have once begun it. Let me add, that if you were first to commit the Latin or Greek to memory, and then recite, in your study, the subject-matter in English, in the very best words which you can command, you would derive a great degree of improvement from the habitual practice. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XVI.

My Lord,

As happiness is the ultimate scope of our studies, as well as of all our other activity, if there is any mode of prosecuting them likely to disturb happiness, it ought to be relinquished, though in itself it may be a right mode, and highly conducive to the particular

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end proposed. But you are sensible, that no happiness can be enjoyed without health; and it will avail you little, to become a scholar, a philosopher, and an orator, to the essential detriment of your constitution.

Therefore, my Lord, as your sincere friend, who wishes your happiness above every thing, and recommends study only so far as it is productive of it, I think it my duty to advise a great attention to the preservation of your health in the conduct of your studies.

Have regard to the attitude in which you read or write. Vary it as much as you can: sit, stand, and walk, alternately. Continue not the same studies after a languor seizes you. Make use of weights, such as were used in the *Skiamachia.* Use a swing for your hands, suspended from the ceiling of your book-room. Adopt every contrivance which the ingenious mechanic has devised to counteract the effects of a sedentary life.

Let your diet be simple; but at the same time plentiful. Abstemiousness has been carried to a pernicious extreme by the present age. Dr. Cheyne's books contributed to introduce it, and Dr. Cadogan's pamphlet on the gout rendered it universal among valetudinarians. Asthenic or nervous diseases have in course multiplied.

But the diseases of inanition are less easily cured than those of repletion. You will, in this, as in every thing else, observe the golden mean; following, in great measure, the dictates of nature, the suggestions of unprovoked appetite, your own feelings, and your own constitution. As a student, in some degree sedentary, you require a generous, though a frugal diet. Be not afraid of growing too corpulent. Many young men and women have ruined



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their health by endeavours to emaciate their persons, for the sake of a genteel figure. It is vain to contend against nature; we may destroy her strength, but we cannot alter her course, without doing ourselves an irreparable injury.

Beware of tampering with medicine. There are books which pretend to render every man his own physician; and they have done great mischief to the weak and valetudinary. Seek the best advice under disease, and follow it. Assist it by a careful attention to diet, fresh air, and moderate exercise. The non-naturals are the best physic.

Read little or nothing very late in the evening: spend the hours before you retire to rest in cheerful conversation, and take care to retire early. You will thus be inclined to rise early, and the morning air will brace and invigorate you for the business of the day. In the management of your body, approach as much as possible to nature and simplicity. Never fail, in fine weather, to use two hours' exercise before dinner. Let not your exercise be very violent, or long protracted. The present age seems to have run into an extreme with respect to exercise, as well as abstemiousness. Exercise has been rendered hard labour, and abstemiousness downright starving. No wonder, that the poor frail machine is soon worn out with constant friction, and with scarcely any oil to supply its waste, and facilitate its motion.

These few hints on the subject of your health, I thought it right to submit to you, before we proceed any farther in our correspondence; but I must add caution upon caution. In taking care of your health, be upon your guard lest you become fanciful; and suspect yourself to be ill when you are in perfect health. Fanciful maladies have the ill effect of real ones, and frequently produce them. Remember the

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famous inscription on the tomb of an imaginary valetudinarian, "I was well, I would be better, and here I am."

You have youth and a good constitution. You may therefore confide in it, so long as you do not abuse it by excess either of indulgence or of self-denial. It has been said, that it is better to wear out, than to rust out. And indeed indolence, an uncomfortable and dishonourable state in itself, is also the fruitful parent of diseases, both real and fanciful.

Be gentle and moderate in every thing which concerns your regimen; and thus will your health and your diligence last the longer. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XVII.

My Lord,

I might now lay aside my pen; for I am clearly of opinion, that when you shall have done what I have already advised, you will be well able to pursue your own studies without assistance. But you desire me to proceed, and give you my thoughts on the remainder of the plan which you proposed; and in general, on subjects allied to literature and the conduct of life. I comply with pleasure; but remember, my Lord, I do not pretend to prescribe with the authority of a tutor. I do no more than communicate my thoughts for our mutual amusement, and you are perfectly at liberty to reject or adopt whatever I may recommend.

If I do not forget, your plan comprehended the Belles Lettres, Logic, Ethics, Metaphysics, Physics, Mathematics, History, General Philosophy, and General Literature.



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In forming your Lordship as a speaker, almost every part of the Belles Lettres will be of use. There is scarcely any beauty of style or sentiment, that may not add to the embellishment, as well as to the substance, of a fine piece of oratory. But in pursuit of the Belles Lettres, after the first great authors are recommended, you must be allowed to choose your books agreeably to your own taste. Much controul or limitation is, I believe, detrimental to genius. I will, however, as you desire it, write to you on the subject; but not in the form of a preceptor. I dictate not to you as a master, but communicate, as a friend and companion.

I have some cursory thoughts to suggest, on polite learning, every part of which is highly necessary for your study; but I shall intersperse them occasionally, or reserve them, till I have written to you a few hints on Logic, Ethics, and the rest of the course which I have just now described. If I shall be found to make frequent excursions, you will remember, that I never affected, in the course of a familiar correspondence, the precise formality of a didactic system. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XVIII.

My Lord,

We can neither write, speak, nor think justly, however plausibly, without reasoning conclusively. If there is an art then, which undertakes to improve us in the power of using our reason, let us earnestly seek its assistance. Such is the art of Logic.

You may speak fluently, rhetorically, and perhaps agreeably, without it; but not solidly. A plain-speaking and clear-headed man, may rise and refute

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the whole of your harangue, if it is illogical, by two or three well-argued sentences without a single trope.

Let us then, my Lord, lay in a store of Logic, as a foundation for our rhetoric. When we shall have fixed a firm foundation, we may adorn our front, as much as we please, with festoons, Corinthian pillars, friezes, and cornices.

But is Logic able to effect what it pretends? Perhaps not quite so much; but judiciously cultivated, it can do a great deal, and it is well worth some share of your attention. Besides, you cannot be a general scholar, which I wish you to be, without some acquaintance with this celebrated art, merely as a branch of literature.

The Logic books which I advise you to procure are; those of Wallis, Sanderson, Aldrich, Watts, and Duncan. Watt's Logic, read in select parts, will perhaps answer your purpose; but I advise you to inspect the others, that you may form a just idea of the scholastic terms, and the language of logicians.

That part of the Logic books which treats of sophisms, is particularly worthy of your study. It may enable you to detect fallacies in the speeches of your opponents, and to avoid them in your own. It may teach you to confute a long harangue with a single observation.

You will in course perfect yourself in the art of making syllogisms; and I am under no apprehension of your dwelling on logical subtilties, so as to lose much time, or cool the ardour of your genius, formed, as it is, for livelier and more active pursuits.

But, my Lord, give me leave to advise you to apply the art of Logic, where it is much wanted, and has seldom been closely followed, to common life.

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You will there find it of great advantage. People are for ever reasoning wrong in common conversation, and on the motives and consequences of their daily conduct. From the want of just thought and accurate reasoning on common emergencies, they hastily form wrong conclusions, and fall into foolish actions; the slaves of prejudice, ignorance, passion, and absurdity. All this might easily be avoided, by exercising plain common sense, sufficiently informed; or, in other words, by sound Logic.

You will derive much happiness and dignity from accustoming yourself to submit your fancies, humours, caprices, and all your eager desires, to the touchstone of a syllogism. When any new question arises in common life, no less than books, which requires a sound judgment, form the matter into a syllogism, and abide by the conclusion, whatever it may be, faithfully and resolutely. By using yourself to this method in little things, you will naturally adopt it in great ones; and the result will be, sound judgment in writing, speaking, and acting; decision in thought, and firmness in conduct.

A most valuable effect this, of studying in the school of Aristotle. It will give you a superiority over more than half mankind, who seldom allow themselves time to reason closely and justly, if they reason at all. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XIX.

My Lord,

In the plan of academical education established in some of the universities, Metaphysics succeed the study of Logic.

But I really cannot recommend them to your par-

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ticular notice. If your genius leads you to them, you will follow its bias, and probably succeed in the pursuits. But they are, to the generality of men, a dull, if not a useless study. It is difficult to point out their utility to men designed for active life. They are indeed an innocent amusement, and serve to fill up the time of the contemplative.

But as your view is to be a general scholar, not merely for the praise of scholarship, or the pleasure of contemplation, but in order to be an accomplished speaker, you will make yourself acquainted with some little treatise of Metaphysics, which may give you a general idea of them, and enable you to ascertain their use and value.

I inclose you a little volume, containing a treatise on them by Francis Hutcheson, the Scotch professor: and if you can read it without falling asleep over it, you may acquire from it no inconsiderable share of elementary knowledge in the recondite science of Metaphysics: a science no further to be pursued by you, than as it is a branch of general erudition.

Read also Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, and you will perhaps have proceeded as far in these abstruse researches as your time will allow, and indeed as far as your present occasions will require. Should you hereafter become a professed philosopher, you will penetrate more deeply, and extend your views more widely, in the dreary region of Metaphysics, where to the eye of genius and imagination, no blossom blows, no verdure softens the horror of the scene. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XX.

My Lord,

The time you save by shortening the period of your application to metaphysics, may be usefully devoted to the more valuable parts of Logic. Mistake me not so much as to suppose that I despise Logic in general. It is only the scholastic part which I wish you to neglect. Rational logic, or common sense improved by rules, is a most valuable art; and I should be glad to observe in you a taste for its cultivation.

Logic, you know, is divided into four parts. The first teaches to conceive clear ideas of single objects: the second, to form a judgment on them: the third, to argue from them conclusively: and the fourth, to arrange them in the best and most lucid order.

Nothing can contribute more than this, to accomplish the orator and the man. Logic, divested of its pedantic and unnecessary subtilties, is very justly termed an instrument; or as Aristotle termed it, an *organon*, to facilitate the attainment of all other sciences.

After reading Sanderson or Watts, form in your own mind a little logical system for daily use. Accustom yourself to conceive clearly, to judge or affirm on solid grounds, to reason irrefragably, and to methodize in the most convenient and luminous arrangement.

Carrying this *organon*, as philosophers call it, or instrument, about you, like your watch, or your eyeglass, you will find it of perpetual service. It will give you an advantage in the transaction of all business, whether public or private. Few men possess

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it. Many have indeed read the common treatises on Logic; but they were either puzzled or disgusted, or both, with the dull subtilties of the schools, and never disentangled the good from the bad, so as to be able to avail themselves of it after leaving the university. You will extract the kernel, and throw away the shell.

A clear head is certainly one of the most valuable blessings which a man, and especially a man of business, such as you intend to be, can possess. Nature must have done a great deal towards producing it; but the *Manual of Logic* which I recommend, that is, a little system compiled by yourself, and divested of every thing superfluous, will improve and assist nature wonderfully.

It is impossible but that he who has long exercised his mind in defining, dividing, distinguishing, arguing, and methodizing, should excel the majority of men with whom he converses. And there is a pleasure in these operations, which will lead him who has once tasted it, to pursue them on all occasions which require deliberation.

Indistinctness of ideas, falsehood, blunders, inconclusive argumentation and confusion, are painful; and yet, to the misfortune of human nature, they are common. Error, guilt, sorrow, and every species of folly and misery, are the consequences; and therefore your Lordship, on a due consideration of the matter, can want no exhortation to study an art, which tends to improve man in that very faculty in which he excels all the animal creation.

But, my Lord, cautions are necessary to be added to almost every piece of advice. While I urge you to reason on every thing, you must remember that I mean that you should reason in silent thought, and not obtrude your arguments on every occasion, and

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in all company. A cavilling, wrangling, disputatious habit will not be borne. You must think with the wise, and, on many occasions, condescend to talk with the vulgar. You will go into few companies, and be present in little business, where some parties do not err against every rule of Logic; in perceiving indistinctly, judging falsely, arguing absurdly, and in placing things in a preposterous order. You must hear, and bear with patience; taking care to let your own mind be regulated by your invaluable organon, or portable rule of reason.

As Logic is but little attended to in the course of what is called a polite education, you will have the advantage, on most occasions, of a singular solidity in your eloquence. You will often gain your point, and be admired and esteemed for great abilities in the conduct of business, when you have done no more than exercise your common sense, unwarped by fancy, prejudice, and passion.

You very justly observe, that I have often, in your hearing, expressed my contempt of scholastic logic. I still avow it. But lest you should suppose that I condemned rational logic with it, I have been here more diffuse in endeavouring to convince you that I entertain the highest esteem for it.

Logic, well cultivated, and understood in the sense in which I have recommended, will not fail, with your parts, learning, and other accomplishments, to render you a distinguished and convincing speaker. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXI.

My Lord,

A witling, who intended to throw contempt upon logic, made an anagram of the word *logica*, and

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called it *caligo*. As it has been taught for centuries in the scholastic method, to raw boys just entered at the university, it might justly be called, the art of darkening and confusing the mind; but as I have advised you to make use of it, I think it capable of becoming a torch to illuminate your whole progress throughout the land of learning: but you must not dwell on it as an end. Use it, as, what it is, merely an instrument. Use it as you would a pair of spectacles, or a spying-glass, when you cannot see so clearly without it as with it. You have good eyes, and perhaps may not often want a magnifying-glass; but it is good to keep one in your pocket.

There is little danger of too great an attention being paid to this study in the present age. The tide of fashion and prejudice runs strongly against it; and it is for this reason I have thought it necessary to urge your attention to it.

It is very true, that God has not made men merely animals, and left it to Aristotle to make them rational. Boys reason, illiterate men and women reason; and though they often reason wrong, yet, for the most part, they are capable of reasoning rightly, if they will but exert their natural abilities, unassisted by art and rule.

It has been said, that a man might as well learn the art of eating, drinking, walking, seeing, smelling, tasting, and the rest, as the art of reasoning; that the power of reasoning comes to a rational creature as naturally as the power of muscular motion: and in exerting muscular motion, who gives himself the trouble to learn the names of the muscles to be moved, and the sinews to be strained? There is great plausibility, and some truth, in all these objections to Logic. There are indeed sound objections, whenever Logic is taught as a principal object; not as a means,

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but as an end, or as absolutely necessary to the use of natural reason.

I recommend it only as an auxiliary, which, under proper management, may be highly useful. And though I have a sovereign contempt for the Logic of the schools, and the poor pedantry, which made a merely instrumental art the ultimate scope of study, and the business of life, yet I most confidently advise you to comprise it among your preparatory studies. You will not spend that time upon the tools, which is necessary to finish the work.

Of the five books which I mentioned, Wallis, Sanderson, Aldrich, Watts, and Duncan, you ask me the several characters. Wallis is clear, but diffuse and tedious. Sanderson is masterly in definition; and I wish you to read him with great attention. Aldrich's book is a little compendium, which may serve occasionally to refresh your memory, whenever you are desirous of reviving your logical knowledge. Watts's being in English, and rendered easy and popular, you may probably be induced to give it the most attentive perusal. Duncan's was used in some colleges in Oxford: but I know not why it should be preferred to the others.

Dr. Watts was of a most devout and religious disposition, and gave every thing he touched a religious tinge. This, I hope, will be no objection, in your mind, to his very ingenious book. It ought to be a recommendation of it to every good and pious man; though it must, at the same time, be allowed, that the divine has some times obtruded divinity, where it could not be introduced without some degree of violence. But good doctrine is not the less good because not delivered from a pulpit

There are many other treatises on Logic, beside those which I have mentioned, but they are scarcely

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worth your attention. They attempt to diversify, where diversification is not wanted, and to facilitate, where the difficulty is easily surmountable by common sagacity. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXII.

My Lord,

I am glad you treated with silent contempt the sarcastical hints which were thrown out against your pedantry, by the merry noblemen whom you describe. To argue with them, would have been fruitless, and not worth your while. They would have overpowered you with noise, nonsense, oaths, and laughter. They may be jolly good-natured companions; but they will never become great men. They must lean on the merit of their ancestors.

It is a common artifice among the ignorant and profligate, to endeavour to explode all appearances of learning under the name of pedantry: and all professions of virtue and religion, under that of methodism, or hypocrisy. I am glad you have sense enough to see their artifice; and spirit enough not to be intimidated by their clamour. Their triumph will be but short. Indeed, it is no triumph, but in the company of silly young men like themselves, who naturally associate together from similarity of taste, for mutual defence and to keep each other in countenance.

It must often be your lot to fall into such company. Whenever it happens, the best way is to treat them with real good-nature, yet with a civility rather distant; never attempting at your age, to preach, as they call it, nor to obtrude your knowledge on their unwilling attention. Yet always re-

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member to act and speak with spirit, blended with your good-nature, or else they will overbear you.

Persevere, with unshaken stedfastness, in the laudable pursuits which you have chosen; and you will soon be looked up to by those who now wish to reduce you to their own level. They are unfortunately ignorant, and have nothing but false fire and audacity to support a figure in society.

Avoid all unnecessary singularity; but be manly enough to dare, in spite of all the imputations of pedantry, to persist in endeavouring to render yourself singular in moral and intellectual excellence, though never so in matters of indifference.

The persons who wished to render you ridiculous, by calling you pedant, have indeed, through the corruption of the state, some political consequence; though they have no other personal authority than their fortunes purchase, and their presumption arrogates. Take care not to make them enemies, for they are revengeful and mischievous. They will soon enough be inclined to court your acquaintance, and to seek your advice. You will be of real consequence to them; for you will have weight of character and weight of abilities, together with rank and fortune. Make them friends by honourable means. They may become, under your guidance, (for, depend upon it, they are too insignificant to become leaders themselves,) useful auxiliaries in accomplishing the purposes of your patriotism, and of your virtuous and benevolent ambition. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXIII.

My Lord,

If I do not forget, your course of studies at the university was disposed in the following order: Logic,

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Metaphysics, Physics. I do not indeed think it the properest order; for Mathematics should precede Physics, as a proper preparation for them; and Metaphysics might be postponed to the last, if not entirely omitted.

But as the order may be changed according to your own discretion, let us proceed to the consideration of Physics, or Natural Philosophy.

My Lord, I am clearly of opinion, that the best introduction to the science, after Arithmetic and Geometry, is a course of lectures on it, illustrated by experiments. Opportunities of attending such lectures abound; for, so pleasing and popular are the performances of the experimentalists, that ingenious men, under the self-assumed title of philosophers, travel the country, as Thespis did of old, with his cart, and bring science to our doors soliciting admission and reward.

Science, or Philosophy, approaching in this humiliated form, loses something of her apparent dignity, but nothing of her real value. The itinerant experimentalists are worthy your attention. They are in possession of an expensive and troublesome apparatus, which it is their interest to preserve constantly in order. They are used to the management of it; and from habit, acquire a facility in performing their operations, which more able theorists may not possess, through defect of a dexterity merely mechanical.

On entering on the study of Natural Philosophy, do not involve yourself in long and dull treatises, which may disgust by their difficulty: but attend experimental lectures repeatedly, till you have a clear and perfect knowledge of all that a comprehensive course usually explains in the most familiar manner. If any subject strikes you with particular force; and seems remarkably congenial to your own turn of

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mind, pursue it further in books. They abound; and are well known to common fame.

Should your genius be peculiarly inclined to natural philosophy, go to the fountain-head, after a due preparation of mathematical learning, and experimental lectures. Dare to enter upon the sublime discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton. *Pemberton's View* of them may be a proper instruction. I could easily give you a long catalogue of introductory and explanatory books; but it is unnecessary; they stand foremost in every shop, and you will select them for yourself, or follow the direction of your experimental lecturer.

Natural History, Botany, Chemistry, will probably excite, as they will richly gratify your liberal curiosity. Why need I mention Buffon, Linné, Bergman, and the other celebrated authors in these departments? Every professor or lecturer can tell you, if you should wish to know, the most popular and esteemed books in these sciences, which are very generally cultivated as fashionable pursuits.

As your fortune will enable you to purchase the large, expensive books in Natural Philosophy, which are illustrated with coloured prints, I advise you to adorn your library with them sumptuously. Persons of your rank and fortune are they who should encourage such works; and they will always afford you an elegant amusement, with little other labour than that of inspection. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXIV.

My Lord,

You seem to have a taste for *Vertù*. I scarcely know whether I may desire you to encourage it. I

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think you should not make it a prime object. There is something in it of a trifling nature, inconsistent with the character of a man of business; of business so important as yours, government and legislation. At the same time, I think you should indulge your inclination within moderate bounds; both because a virtuoso taste will afford you entertainment as a favourite study, and information on many useful subjects connected with general knowledge.

Coins, medals, shells, and all the articles which furnish the cabinets of the curious, supply a philosophical mind with many hints for useful reflection. To the trifling mind which dotes on them, as an infant on its toys, their utility is circumscribed to their power of affording an inoffensive amusement. But let me add, that inoffensive amusements are of too much value among the opulent whose time is their own, to be entirely despised.

You ask me, whether I advise you to indulge an antiquarian taste. By all means; if you feel a strong propensity to it. It will furnish you with much delight, and much matter for entertaining reflection. The mind must have a hobby-horse to ride for recreation.

But though I do not dissuade you from being a virtuoso and an antiquarian, yet I most earnestly recommend it to you, to confine your taste for vertù and antiquities within such bounds, as may prevent it from absorbing your attention to studies, which, whether your own honour or the advantage of others is concerned, I must consider as infinitely more important. Let others trifle. A nobleman is born for momentous affairs.

This restraint is, I know, attended with some difficulty. For if we love trifles at all, we commonly love them immoderately. Our whimsical studies,



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being objects of our own choice, are apt to engross our affections like darlings. I should be sorry to see you in the midst of your coins and antiquities, forgetting your eloquence, your style, your polite learning, and your enlarged philosophy. I wish you to emulate a Clarendon and a Chatham, rather than a Leland and a Hearne. Perhaps there is little danger of excess of application to any studies of this kind, in an age when horses, hounds, the bottle and the dice, often engross the most precious hours of the most improvable age. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXV.

My Lord,

I have no great opinion of Ethics treated as a science, according to the form of the old schoolmen. Great ingenuity is indeed shown in them; but it is ingenuity which tends to confound the plain and natural distinction of good and evil, written on the heart of man in the luminous characters of a sunbeam. In the hands of the casuists, ethics become a science, not very favourable to that simplicity of mind which contributes more to honesty and to true enjoyment, than all the precepts of the most celebrated moralists. Feel as you ought to feel, and, with the direction of common sense, you will, for the most part, act as you ought to act.

Since, however, the art of man has reduced ethics to the form of a system and a science, it will be proper for you to give it some of your attention. To know something of them systematically, is a necessary part of a comprehensive education. I must mention by the way, that the glorious gospel rule, of *doing to others as we wish they should do unto us*,

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constitutes an epitome of many folios, in casuistical and systematical morality.

There is a pretty compendium of moral philosophy by Francis Hutcheson, whose little book on metaphysics I have already mentioned to you. You will find in it the elements of ethics, natural jurisprudence, economics, and politics, clearly and succinctly displayed. This will be a very useful introduction, as the author justly professes it to be, to the ancient moralists, to Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, and Cicero; and to the moderns, Grotius, Cumberland, Puffendorf, and Harrington.

These great authors you will read as your leisure and inclination may lead you. The celebrity of Puffendorf's book *de Officio Hominis et Civis* is such, that I think you will not rest satisfied, without giving it a very attentive perusal, after reading Hutcheson. If you should make yourself a perfect master of Hutcheson's Compendious Institution, and of Puffendorf, you will not be at a loss on the subject of sytematic or scientific ethics, and your understanding will be much enlightened by the study.

Paley's Book on Moral and Political Philosophy has singular merit; for it is entertaining as well as highly instructive; a circumstance rather uncommon in scientific treatises on morals. Remember, however, that I do not entirely subscribe to all his doctrines, several of which appear to be a little too casuistical; I will not say, jesuitical, for I greatly respect the author. Read it with attention; and make your own reflections on some parts, which appear to be accommodated to things as they are, rather than as they should be. The Archdeacon acknowledges himself greatly indebted to *Search's Light of Nature;* the three or four last volumes of which, certainly abound in excellent thoughts, and



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original illustrations; I mean those volumes, which have in the title-page, "*The Light of Nature and the Gospel blended.*" This work is voluminous, verbose, and heavy; and, notwithstanding its great merit, difficult to be read without weariness and occasional disgust, arising from prolixity. Yet it abounds with new ideas and valuable doctrine.

If you can find time, and feel an inclination for these studies, I must not omit to urge your reading *Grotius on the Rights of War and Peace.* It is certainly a master-piece of its kind; and therefore should be known by every general scholar. At the same time, I cannot but be a little apprehensive lest your style as an orator should suffer by a long study of compositions, rather jejune and destitute of grace. They are merely skeletons; whereas I wish you to study complete models, where the features glow with life, and the limbs are nerved with vigour. I do not introduce you to the *hortus siccus*, when you can see the lily and rose blooming and flourishing with life and beauty, in your garden.

To learn ethics, I should therefore rather choose to refer you to such writers as Plato, Cicero, and Addison. There you will behold the body of truth, adorned with beauty and the complexion of health. In Puffendorf, Grotius, and other systematic writers, you see truth, indeed, but you see her lovely form disfigured by the knife of the anatomist.

After having read a volume or two of the best writers in the systematic way, in order to obtain an idea of ethics, thus treated as a science, you will proceed to imbibe morality, as the bee sucks honey, from every book of history, poetry, oratory, and divinity, which falls under your notice. You will roam from flower to flower, and return loaded to your hive.

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The book of nature, and the book of the world, lie open to you; books little read by the Grotius's and the Barbeyracs. There, with the assistance of the knowledge you have already acquired, and will hereafter increase, in your study, you will comment on men and manners; always measuring the morality of actions by the golden canon already repeated, of *doing to others as you wish they should do unto you.* I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXVI.

My Lord,

I must repeat my caution against the casuistry which the great writers on ethics have involuntarily introduced. A good heart and a good understanding, assisted by a virtuous and liberal education, will seldom err in deciding on the rectitude or obliquity of actions. But he who is accustomed to suppose nice cases of conscience, and to make curious exceptions and distinctions in morality, will, whenever he is inclined, find it no difficult task to vindicate, by ingenious sophisms, any villainy. Hence the sophistry and false philosophy which disgrace the age. Systematic ethics and casuistry, however ingenious, are, for the most part, to be considered as curious subjects for speculation, as fine exercises for the reasoning powers, and as pleasing amusements for the contemplative. When you act, consult your conscience; consult experience, consult prudence, consult real life; and discard chimeras of perfection.

My Lord, I have hitherto said little upon Religion. I reserve that subject for our future correspondence. But I cannot leave the subject of ethics, without

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giving you my idea, that in the Gospels, and the excellent sermons to which they have given rise in the English language, you will find, as might be expected, the best code of moral law which the world ever knew. Philosophy, sublimed by religion, comes out, like metals refined by the fire.

And let me entreat you, not to be deterred either from hearing or reading good sermons, by the prejudices of the profligate and the infidel. In these you will find morality taught and enforced with the powers of human eloquence, and under the sanction of divine authority. Some of our divines were fine classical scholars, and most profound philosophers; so that in them you will discover the beauties of style, the finest ethics, derived indeed, in some measure, from heathen philosophy, but improved and enforced by religion.

Before I leave the subject of ethics, which is indeed a very copious one, but which I abridge, for the sake of avoiding unnecessary details, let me recommend to your reading, *Wollaston's Religion of Nature.* It will agreeably exercise your understanding, though you should disapprove the systematical form. You may detect some mistakes in it; you may think it too mathematical in its method and argumentation, but it is full of fine truth; and the marginal notes are pregnant with most valuable instruction, derived from the great masters of antiquity.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXVII.

My Lord,

Though Economics are not usually taught in our modern schools, they are worthier of attention, than

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many things which occupy the time of the student, and inflate him with the self-conceit of profound erudition.

You must have observed how many, both noblemen and commoners, with ample inheritances, are reduced to a state of pecuniary distress. Much of it certainly arises from their profusion: but perhaps more from their neglect of economy. They are unwilling to inspect the state of their finances, from habitual indolence; and they are also too often unable to adjust their accounts, through ignorance of arithmetic. The more involved their accounts become, the more disagreeable, because the more laborious is the task of examining them. They at last give up the whole in despair, and suffer every thing relating to their finances to be conducted by persons who are indifferent to their employer's interest, and attentive solely to their own.

I recommend, indeed, a personal attention to your estate; but not a mean parsimony. I recommend it, that you may have it in your power to be both just and generous; to pay your debts with punctuality, and to give and spend liberally. Independence is one of the daughters of economy. Your frugality should be the fountain of your munificence. The reservoir, without this care, however large, will be often exhausted. But I must protest, with peculiar earnestness, against the character of a miserly nobleman. It should be considered as a contradiction in terms.

Economics were dignified by the ancients with the appellation of Practical Philosophy. Xenophon wrote one book upon them, and Aristotle two. But they dwell too much, as might be expected, on general theories; and cannot enter into such particulars as are really useful in the conduct of com-

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mon life. I advise you, nevertheless, to read the work of Xenophon, as it is not long, and is capable of affording you amusement.

Cato, Varro, Columella, and other old authors, have written upon some branches of economics; chiefly the agricultural. As a man of general learning, some knowledge of them may become you; but to gain a skill in economics for real utility, I must refer you to experience, observation, common sense, and common life. I venture to say, that there are more useful ideas on the subject to be collected in the merchant's counting-house, the steward's office, and in the farm, than in all the books of all the philosophers.

But to enable you to make due use of the information you may obtain from any of these quarters, I must recommend it to you to acquire a competent skill in practical arithmetic, and in book-keeping. Despise not the humblest parts of knowledge which can contribute to your comfort and your independence.

Much of your independence, I have already hinted, will be secured by a due attention to your revenue. You will not be obliged to sell your vote and influence; nor to court a minister for a lucrative employment, so long as you preserve your own finances uninvolved.

Study economics, therefore, with at least as much attention as those sciences which terminate chiefly in speculation. But I must repeat the caution against excessive parsimony. The caution may not appear to be necessary to you at present; for you are conscious, and I am ready to allow, with pleasure, that you are as liberal as becomes your birth and property.

But avarice has ever been one of the strongest

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passions of human nature; and it increases perversely, when there is the least occasion for it, in age and in affluence. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXVIII.

My Lord,

I thank you for the letters which you often send me, containing inquiries suggested by your own reading and reflection. You know I never meant to write a regular system in a familiar correspondence. Your suggestions of occasional topics agreeably breaks the chain of a too formal arrangement.

In studying ethics, you say you could not be disgusted, as well as perplexed, by the diversity of opinion concerning the chief good of man. You ask me my opinion concerning the grand question, In what consists happiness? It is a subject on which I might involve you and myself in a long disquisition; but take the opinions of a modern philosopher, a little dilated.

Mr. Paley enumerates four particulars in which happiness consists:

1st, The exercise of the social affections.

2dly, The exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some engaging end; because engagement is the great point to be pursued.

3rdly, Happiness depends upon the prudent constitution of the habits. Set the habits in such a manner, that every change may be a change for the better.

4thly, Happiness consists in health. When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel in ourselves a happiness, independent of any outward gratification whatever.

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Let us consider these particulars in their order.

In the first place, happiness consists in the exercise of the social affections.

Your Lordship has no doubt experienced the sweet sensations attending the kind affections. There was a complacency diffused itself over your bosom, whenever you acted kindly, affectionately, cordially. Cherish such sensations. Sorry I am to say, that this fountain of happiness is often choked and dried up in the circles of gaiety and pleasure to which your rank will introduce you; and the highly-polished man of fashion becomes a selfish animal, seeking only his own gratification: he deceives himself by his greediness: he loses one of the sweetest enjoyments of life: he becomes narrow-minded, morose, imperious, and consequently very unamiable to all around him, even to his dependents and expectants; they secretly despise him, while, for their own interest, they court his favour. As you value your happiness, never lose sight of this first requisite to solid enjoyment, the exercise of the social affections.

The second particular is, the exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some engaging end.

But here, my Lord, great caution is necessary. There are ends very engaging, which are finally productive of mischief and misery. I hope you will avoid gaming entirely; it is certainly engaging, but its consequences tend to degrade nobility: it introduces to low company; it endangers the estate; it occupies the mind so closely, as to leave little attention for the really noble objects which ought to engage men distinguished in society by titles and by many valuable privileges. Let the charms of science engage you: let the improvement of arts engage

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you! let the pleasures of conversation or study engage you: let politics engage you; I do not mean the politics of a party, but the enlarged liberal politics of a philanthropist, and a citizen of the world, as well as of a Briton. Be constantly occupied in some laudable, honourable, useful pursuit, and you will feel it your happiness. When the serious business of life is laid aside awhile, be engaged in amusements which do not degrade, while they recreate. I know you disapprove the taste for boxing, and some other fashionable modes of killing time, which, if tolerable in the lowest plebeian, are unbecoming a peer. Surely the grand theatre of the world affords entertaining objects enough for you to contemplate, without reducing you to the necessity of herding with the meanest of the performers on it, in the meanest of their pastimes.

The third requisite to happiness, mentioned by our philosophical divine, is the prudent constitution of the habits. "Set the habits," says he, "in such a manner, that every change may be for the better."

Do not too eagerly anticipate pleasure. Do not use up, as he expresses it, the materials of happiness too soon: be moderate: glut not the appetite, but keep it in a state susceptible of obvious gratification. Accustom not yourself to violent pleasures, which must, from their nature, be difficult to obtain, and short in duration. Form a habit of deriving pleasure from natural circumstances, and such as may occur every day in the common course of human life.

"In the fourth place, happiness consists in health. When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel a happiness independent of any outward circumstances whatever."

It has been said, that an attention to health should be a part of our religion. Many of our nobility

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certainly pursue health by exercise; but remember, my Lord, that temperance and good hours are no less necessary than bodily agitation. Love a life of simplicity; endeavour not, by false refinement, to render man a different animal from that which God and nature have made him. As an animal, he requires rest and refreshment at seasonable hours; and when he follows nature, he also, like the animals around him, commonly enjoys health and vigour. But though health is necessary to happiness, yet surely it is degrading to man, especially in his youth, to be satisfied with health alone; this is to live the life of a brute, or even of a vegetable. Use health in profitable and honourable pursuits; a life so spent would be far more pleasurable and reputable, even if it were shorter, than an inglorious existence dragged out in listless inaction. You were not raised above mankind by your king and country, merely that you might eat, drink, and sleep, without being called to account for your waste of time. To live merely to take exercise for an appetite, and to indulge it, when obtained, in luxurious excess, is, for the sake of life, to lose its very best purposes. Yet your Lordship knows some men, who plume themselves on blood, rank, and title, and yet employ all their morning in fox-hunting or phaeton-driving, that they may carouse in the evening over dull port, and gorge dainties, rendered poisonous by the arts of cookery. But as I have heard you express yourself with pity on such men, I need not dissuade you from imitating their example.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXIX.

My Lord,

Whoever observes the present times, and compares them with the past, will discover, that one principal feature of them is a neglect of subordination. Rank is not respected as it used to be in the days of our fathers. A nobleman is less regarded at present, than a gentleman of moderate fortune in the reign of the first or second George.

One man is indeed so little superior to another by nature, that the great distinctions that have formerly been conferred and preserved, were more supported by opinion than by reality. And how was that opinion raised and maintained? First, let us hope, by intrinsic merit; and secondly, we are sure, by external appearance. The nobility lived in a state of magnificence which awed the vulgar, by whom I mean the worthless of all kinds, and kept them at a due distance. They dressed with a splendour, which the little imitators of gentility could not equal, though they might copy at a distance. They reverenced themselves and their rank, and consequently avoided company and diversions which lowered them in the minds of the people, over whom they were so pre-eminently exalted. They lived at their noble mansions hospitably, and travelled to and from them with a princely retinue. They were almost idolized, by fascinating the gaping crowd, as creatures of a superior order.

But now, your Lordship knows, it is the fashion among great men to throw off all personal state. They seek *otium sine dignitate.* It is indeed a pleasant fashion to their inferiors, and perhaps to

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themselves. But, as a body, do they consult their interest, their honour, or their permanency, by lessening that opinion, by which chiefly they were raised to their superiority? Let events determine. We see what has happened in France; *facilis descensus.* If nobility is a valuable privilege; if it conduces to the happiness of society, by exciting virtue, and protecting it; then any mode which can secure its dignity inviolate and undiminished, is worth attention. And be assured, that external pomp is necessary in a community where men are not universally philosophers. All states have invested magistrates and nobles with official garments, splendid coronets, maces, fasces, or something to strike the eyes and imagination of the mere Fæx Romuli, the lower orders of the people, who must in all states be the majority.

You observe that the bishops, judges, counsellors, clergy, military officers, are all decorated by the wisdom of our ancestors with certain robes or dresses, distinctive, solemn, or splendid. "All the world's a stage," says the poet; and if so, all the performers must appear in character, dressed according to the *το πρεπον*, the real decorum of their characters, or they will be mutually disgusted.

Now, my Lord, no man dislikes formality without substance more than myself. Ease, and some degree of carelessness, add a charm to private and humble life: but to those who are exalted by opinion at first, and afterwards by the laws and constitution of their country, an appearance corresponding with their rank and their titles is requisite. The same love of ease and equality in appearances, which annihilate all the insignia of superiority, or civil distinction, will proceed in time to destroy the superiority itself, in a natural and unavoidable progression.

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So that, my Lord, though I do not recommend empty pride, yet I must advise, after having adorned your hereditary rank by personal and acquired merit, to assume all the external dignity, which your ancestors wisely deemed necessary to support the honour of nobility. Be nobly distinguished in every part of your establishment and your mansions. Mankind are so made, as to expect externals to correspond with internals. You have sense enough not to value yourself the more for a fine house, a fine equipage, or a fine dress; but the artisan, the servant, the tenant, the vulgar in general, will pay a deference to you proportioned to your appearance. If you do not comply with their prejudices in this respect, they will soon consider all the honour they pay to your birth and titles as prejudice, which they ought not to indulge. Many among the nobility of this age have demolished the outworks; let them not be surprised if the mob rush in and raze the citadel.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXX.

My Lord,

You took my advice, I find, and have been reading the eighth satire of Juvenal. I should be much pleased to hear your comments; but you desire my thoughts upon it. You know I am always ready to employ my literary leisure in complying with such requests as proceed from an ingenuous desire of information. Such a desire is itself a mark of a noble nature.

Juvenal's eighth satire contains sentiments which cannot be perfectly agreeable to the feelings of a

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corrupt and depraved nobility. But are they founded in truth? Then adopt them, my Lord; and relinquishing in your own mind all hereditary claims to distinction, found them on your own personal merit. Emulate the first founder of your family, if he was raised by virtue. Be ennobled by your own efforts; scorning to shine faintly, like the moon, with reflected light. Be a sun; not a planet, nor a satellite.

You have read this fine remain of antiquity in the original. It abounds in spirit and fire, as well as solid sense. I shall not recapitulate the sentiments, as they must lose much of their force in any expressions but those of their animated author. But let me prevail with you to learn the whole satire memoriter. You have been used to commit passages from the Latin classics to your memory; and you can remember nothing in any of them more conducive to your real honour, than the eighth satire of Juvenal. It is to be wished that it may be well translated, for the benefit of those of the young nobility who are not so well able to read it in the original as your Lordship. Even they may make out the meaning, with benefit to themselves, by the assistance of Madan's literal translation, and notes. Dryden or Johnson should have exerted all the vigour of their genius, in naturalising in our country a poem so full of instruction to those whose conduct and example is of the first consequence to society.

Do you think that my Lord *****, or ***, or ****, would have disgraced their ancestors andthe peerage, by their gross ignorance, their brutal behaviour, their low pursuits, their vulgar associates, if they had been impressed early in life with the ideas of the manly Juvenal on true nobility. But they were wretchedly educated, servilely flattered, surrounded

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by mean hirelings, ready, for their own interest, to gratify them in every folly, and to anticipate their whimsical wants.

A classical education contributes more than any thing I know to ennoble the mind. A boy conversant with the ancient Greeks and Romans imbibes the most generous ideas, and the tincture will not easily be lost. But you will say that Lord ***, and ***, and **, and ****, had a classical education. Pardon me, my Lord, they were sent to schools where they might have had it, but they had it not. They relied on private tutors and plebeian school-fellows for all their exercises. They employed their time and thoughts in frolics, in spending money, and acquiring the reputation of fine fellows, who were above the plodding toil of application. They never caught the patriot spirit of a Junius Brutus, a Cato, or any of the noble personages handed down by Plutarch. But after spending a few years at a public school, to the injury of their health and principles, in learning a little of the elements of grammar, they rapidly run through Europe, and then returned to display the effects of their education, their political and philosophical and classical education, in corrupting boroughs, and managing an election. Feeble in mind, feeble in body, their estates and their characters equally ruined, they have nothing to support them but an empty title, the prejudices of the people in favour of birth, and the countenance of any minister, who may make use of them as tools of their ambition.

We give, says Juvenal, to mangy curs, the noble names of "Lion, Tiger, Leopard." When we call ****, *****, ***, and many others, Lords, we honour them much as we do the mangy curs of Juvenal.

If such men multiply, and the modern modes of



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education and modern manners seem favourable to their multiplication, can we expect that nobility will be honoured in England any more than it is in France? Be assured, my Lord, that the people will trample coronets under their feet, when they no longer sparkle with the gems of virtue; and wipe off armorial bearings from the coach doors, which have nothing to authorize them but the venal nonsense of the herald's office.

Such characters alone as that to which your Lordship is generously aspiring can save the ancient and magnificent fabric of nobility from falling into ruin under the assaults of common sense, and that free spirit which has borne all before it in America and France. You, and those who like you, consider what it is to be a nobleman indeed; honourable and respectable for your private and personal qualities, amiable and valuable to your generation for beneficent exertions; such only can form columns to support and adorn the splendid edifice. Will titled gamesters, players, grooms, sycophants, boroughmongers, maintain the exclusive privileges of nobility, against the united efforts of a people, who know how to estimate the real value of all political distinctions, and who, burning with a love of liberty, will not fail to destroy a corrupt aristocracy, as the natural enemy of every thing truly noble?

As I would plant and cultivate the oak of the forest, for the use of our future navies, for the defence and glory of our country; so would I raise and preserve a rising generation of nobles, enlightened with knowledge, animated with virtue, determined to support their eminence of station by eminent desert; and like Corinthian columns in a temple, exhibiting, with the beautiful foliage of the capital, perfect uprightness and solidity.

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I look forward with pride and pleasure to that day, when the people will consider your Lordship as a support and ornament not only of the peerage, but of the nation; and if the hand of violence shall be cutting down the ancient tree of nobility, command it to be spared for the golden branch which you, and those who imitate you, shall display to the admiring multitude.

Go, my Lord, I entreat you, and study once more the eighth satire of Juvenal, and commit it to your memory, never to be effaced from the tablet.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXI.

My Lord,

I return to our literary correspondence. But I beseech you to interrupt me, when any thing occurs which you think necessary to consider as conducive to the ornament of that illustrious character, a nobleman in a free country.

You desired me, in the last conversation we had, to give you some directions for the formation of your classical library. I admire the beautiful room which you have allotted to this purpose. The aspect, which is north, I approve, as you will not be incommoded by the sun in the summer, and you can always make it warm enough in winter. The prospect of the fine lawn from the bow-window, with the deer frequently feeding upon it, and the weeping birches, magnificent oaks, and deeply verdant beeches, are objects which you must always contemplate with serene pleasure; a state of mind highly favourable to study.

I wish you to divide your Latin classical library into four principal compartments. You do not affect



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to have a very large or very curious collection of books. You very sensibly wish to have a library for use, rather than ostentation.

Let the first compartment be entitled, "AUCTORES LINGUÆ LATINÆ ÆTATIS AUREÆ." And here place the works of Cicero complete; Plautus, Terence, Corpus Poetarum, Lucretius, Cæsar, Cornelius Nepos, Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius, Varro, Virgil, Horace, Sallust, Livy, Justin, Cato, Columella, Rei Rustici Scriptores, Vitruvius, and Ovid.

As to the editions, as new ones are frequently coming out, consult your very respectable booksellers, Messrs. Egertons, or Robson, or Payne, or White, and they will inform you with judgment and fidelity. Harwood on the Classics, though not without mistakes and improprieties, will be useful to you as a directory; especially with the additional assistance of the most eminent booksellers of London. I do not wish you to be a mere book-collector. Get your information of the best editions as easily and as soon as you can, and acquiesce in them. Your Lordship's business is to read the contents, and not to dwell on title pages and dates. Others may perform that ministerial office, unless, from a love of books, you should take delight in the research, as an innocent amusement of your leisure.

The second compartment is to be marked with the title "ÆTATIS ARGENTEÆ;" and must contain Curtius, Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, Cornelius Celsus, Dictys Cretensis, Phædrus, Seneca Rhetor, and Seneca Philosophus, Senecæ Tragediæ, Persius, Lucan, Petronius, Manilius and Gratius.

The third compartment includes the authors ÆTATIS ÆNEÆ, some of whom deserve a better denomination; particularly the excellent Quintilian, Juvenal, Plinius Major, Plinius Minor, Suetonius, Tacitus, Florus,

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Statius, Valerius Flaccus, Martialis, and Silius Italicus.

The fourth compartment is of a still lower character and comprehends the authors ÆTATIS FERREÆ; A. Gellius, Apuleius, Tertullianus, Arnobius, Minutius Felix, Vegetius et Frontinus, Lactantius Censorinus, Aurelius Victor, Symmachi Epistolæ, Macrobius, Ausonius, Prudentius, Claudianus, Calphurnius et Numerianus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Apicius, Martianus Capella, Julius Fermicus, and Boethius; and conclude with Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores. So much for your Latin classical library. I shall resume the subject of your library in my next letter. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXII.

My Lord,

In recommending a library, I do not mean to transcribe a bookseller's catalogue. Books are so numerous in all departments, that I might fill volumes in the enumeration of the titles alone. But yours is to be a select library. Your life is to be a life of action, as well as contemplation. You will not crowd your shelves with books, that are valuable only because they are rare or curious. Excellence of composition, and copiousness or authenticity of information, will alone render books valuable in your opinion. The most excellent books are the commonest. Why became they common? Because they were demanded. And why were they demanded? Because they were well written; illuminated with genius, or furnished with treasures of knowledge.

But I proceed to your Greek classical collection. You are not to be a professor of the Greek lan-

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guage; but as a general and polite scholar, you are to form a just idea of the poets, the orators, the historians, and the philosophers, of that enlightened country. You read Greek with facility; therefore you will not object to admitting the best Greek authors into your library; they will not be strangers to you. Enter therefore Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Xenophon, Aristophanes, Pindar, Strabo, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Athenæus, Marcus Antoninus, Longinus, Epictetus, Theocritus, Lucian, and Anacreon. Here will be Greek enough; and probably much more than you will be able, in an active life, to read with attention. But you will read something of all of them, that you may not be ignorant of what the world has so long admired, and that you may derive something from them for the improvement of your own style.

There are many other Greek authors of inferior note, whom you will add to your collection, if you find any occasion for them, or are impelled by a desire of singular eminence in Grecian literature; an ambition which, perhaps, is not to be expected in one who is elevated to high rank, that he may take an active part in legislation, and the government of his country. Your models are not a Barnes, a Bentley, a Toup; but a Chatham. Lord Chatham was an excellent scholar, and, I believe, a good Grecian; but, then, he read Greek as a statesman and a philosopher, not as a critic or a grammarian. So will you, my Lord, if you follow the advice of your friend.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXIII.

My Lord,

Expect not that I shall assume the office of dictating to you every book which you are to place in your library. Choose for yourself; go into the booksellers' shops, and make purchases according to your inclination. You will have a great pleasure in exercising your own judgment in selecting your library. You will love your books the better for it, and read them with more avidity. It is a misfortune attending great riches and high rank, that their possessors do not act enough for themselves; but procure the easiest and pleasantest things to be done for them by their dependents, agents, factors, and officious friends. In vain has Providence given them eyes, hands, and common sense; they must see, act and think, by the organs of others. If such be the privilege of noble birth, it should be deprecated as a calamity. The powers of action and of thinking are gifts of nature, superior to any which monarchs have to bestow. Beware of falling into that indolence, to which a facility of obtaining substitutes, in your Lordship's situation, too easily seduces the incautious.

I will not therefore undertake to furnish your English library. Look into the catalogues; frequent the shops; obtain a knowledge of books sufficient for your purpose, by actual inspection. You will have great pleasure in finding a book you want in a catalogue; and will hasten, with all the ardour of an amateur, to purchase it before it is gone. Much literary amusement and knowledge may be acquired

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by collecting your own books in person. Arrange them according to your own judgment; and let not your library be furnished, as it is papered or painted, by the yard and without your own interposition.

Maps, charts, chronological tables, globes, telescopes, and all the proper furniture of the library, you will not fail to procure; but you will choose for yourself by actual observation, and by comparison: the very choice is an improving amusement; and you will like the various articles better, and use them more attentively, when they have cost you some time, and some pains in their selection.

Do you not think it a great disgrace to nobility, that certain rich lords (I hope they are few) possess little or no library, never purchase a book, and consider all money thrown away, that is not expended on horses, dogs, wine, and elections? Such men are all body without mind; corpus sine mente, as Horace says. But if such should increase, will not the peerage sink in public esteem; and may not an enlighted people rise with indignation, and demolish the aristocracy? Noblemen are lights upon a hill, they attract universal attention. If their light burns dimly, or emits an evil odour in the socket, there is danger lest it should be extinguished, and the useless beacon levelled with the earth. There are times when the people are ready enough to pay homage to talents and virtue, but they were never less disposed to worship golden calves.

"Nobility (says Agrippa, as quoted by Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*) is a sanctuary of knavery and haughtiness, a cloak for wickedness, and the execrable vices of pride, fraud, contempt, boasting, oppression, dissimulation, lust, gluttony, malice, ignorance. and impiety."

God forbid that this representation should be

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generally just in our country. If the people should be of opinion that it is so at any time, depend upon it the pageant is at an end, and dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, and barons, come off the stage Messrs. Egalites.

Whether such an event would be beneficial to mankind, I presume not to decide; but I ardently wish to preserve an institution that may raise human nature, and stimulate to generous exertion. Such I think the order of nobility, under due regulations; for honour is the nurse of virtue, as well as of the arts.

In the fabric of the political edifice, nobility has been a beautiful and substantial column; may it remain so, and may you, my Lord, form one of its most admired embellishments. In order to be so, much time must be spent in your library. It is mind, and mind only, which can give real and lasting dignity. Externals are very proper to set it off, as foils to increase the brilliancy of a jewel; but the foil gives no real value to French paste.

But what shall we say of those noblemen who never read? Their minds are no less coarse and empty than those of their footmen. Let us bear with them, however, while we can: but your spirit will, I hope, always keep you distinguished from those that are only to be tolerated.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXIV.

My Lord,

An ancient mansion, or an old oak, undecayed, are venerable. The mind approaches them with a kind of awe. So an ancient family, long famous for its virtues and prosperity, and still flourishing, is natu-

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rally productive of esteem. But if the old mansion is reduced to a mere heap of rubbish, and the old oak rotten, we pass them unnoticed, or consider them as incumbrances of the ground. Apply this image to fallen, corrupt nobility.

To use a vulgar phrase, you must keep it up, my Lord. Send a poor puny, degenerate lord, descended from the conqueror, with no abilities of mind and body, and a healthy, virtuous, and able plebeian, into a foreign country, among perfect strangers, without any distinction of dress; and the strangers will soon determine which is the nobleman. Nature produces gold, the king stamps it, and it passes current as a guinea; but if the guinea has been clipt, or if there is too much alloy in it, it will be rejected at the exchange. The pure gold without any stamp at the mint, will always retain its value according to its weight. Stamp your gold, however, with virtuous qualities, such as affability, gentleness, courage, good temper, magnanimity, learning, eloquence, generosity, and it will never suffer the disgrace of being cut asunder by the sheers, and cast into the crucible.

I am far from disparaging nobility. The times are rather unfavourable to it; and I am endeavouring to render it really venerable, by founding its fancied superiority on real preeminence. Noblemen may indeed value themselves highly; but self-value does not increase their real value. Their real value is that alone at which they are esteemed by the public. It is not the seller, but the buyer, that determines the price of a commodity.

Convinced as I am that you have early imbibed these sentiments, I should not inculcate them again, had you not informed me, that two or three young lords, with whom you often associate, had endea-

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voured to persuade you, that there is a dignity in birth, independent of personal merit, or beneficent exertion. They spend their time chiefly in the stable, at the tavern, and at the gaming-house; they substitute a horse-laugh in the place of all argument; and they would willingly reduce you, by ridiculing your virtues, to a level with their own degenerate state. But what say the people at large, on whom both you and they must depend for a continuance of your honours and privileges? They bid you cast your eyes over the British channel, and learn in time a lesson of caution.

Only consider the useless life of these young noblemen, whose fortunes are princely, and whose titles, in sound, right honourable. They rise at twelve, they dress, they ride, they dine, they game, they go to some public place, they sup, they drink to excess, and then retire again, and renew the same contemptible round on the morrow. Can you wonder that the people view their civil distinction with an evil eye? When such an one is on his departure, let him take a retrospective view of his life: What have I done? may he ask: my life has been useless to others, and to myself dishonourable. Am I one of the lords of the creation, as well as a lord in civil rank, distinguished above others by my country? If nature had made me a tree, or an animal without reason, I might probably have been more useful than I have been, and more truly estimable.

Never let the false wit and rude conversation of such degenerate nobles, stop you in your honourable career. Treat them with politeness, but act and speak with spirit; and, above all, persevere in the path of honour which you have chosen, and mark the end of your choice. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXV.

My Lord,

Health makes the best blood, not nobility. I could not help adopting this idea, on seeing poor Lord **** at the coffee-room. He is but five and thirty, and he has all the infirmity of three-score and ten. He was born feeble; and yet sent early to one of the fashionable schools, because his father and grandfather were educated there. His pockets were always full of money, and he indulged himself, in consequence, with every luxury in eating and drinking. High-seasoned food, and brandy and water, every day, at the age of eighteen! Sad havoc it made in his feeble frame! A dreadful disease, at twenty, introduced the decrepitude of old age at thirty. And there he stands (and, alas! can hardly stand) a melancholy example of the folly of parents, in sacrificing the health and happiness of their children to fashion. His servant is the son of one of his tenants, and nearly of the same age as himself. How strong and hale! how florid his complexion! how cheerful his looks! Poor Lord **** would give up all his pedigree for half his footman's vigour.

It is a great error of the present age, to bring boys forward too soon. They are made little men, and they continue little men. Unfortunately this is in a peculiar manner the case of the rich and great. What poor creatures are many who are born to sit in the senate-house, above their fellow-citizens, with coronets and robes of honour! Their whole business is to take care of their health; how can they watch over a nation? They may indeed give a feeble voice at the command of a minister; but will the

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people respect them? And does not their imbecility of mind and body, besides the great misfortune of it to themselves, endanger the existence of their order, by rendering it contemptible?

Among other modes of restoring lustre to the peerage, if it be true that it is tarnished, care should be taken, in early youth, to prevent the body from being weakened by excess or effeminacy. A school in a great, corrupt, and unhealthy metropolis, should never be chosen by those who are able to select the place of their children's education. The diet of young persons should be plain, yet always plentiful. Early hours of retiring to repose, and rising from it, should be constantly insisted upon. Boys should not be introduced to the luxuries of a nobleman's table, not even their father's; nor suffered to drink wine, or any strong liquor.

Fortunately for you, you were educated in the country, and with rural simplicity of diet, and accommodation. You therefore preserved your health, while you acquired those solid accomplishments, which will last you through life. But the danger is not yet over: the late hours which modern life renders almost unavoidable, are certainly a deviation from nature, and therefore debilitating. The luxury of the table is also carried to a great height; and excess in wine, at an early age, has become, in certain elevated circles, fashionable.

Be singular, my Lord, in avoiding such practices as will render you an old man before your time. Take care not to reduce yourself to such a state as may oblige you to become a valetudinarian for life. Strength of body is necessary to strength of mind. Temperance will contribute to both; but let it not run into excess, and become the abstinence of a devotee. And let not your exercise take up all your

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time, and serve only, as is the case with some of the fox hunters, to give an appetite for nocturnal orgies, or the carousals of gross gluttony, and unideal conviviality. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXVI.

My Lord,

You reprimand me in a pleasant style of raillery; and I acknowledge, with justice. I have digressed too long from literary subjects. But you must remember, that when I engaged in correspondence with you, I told you I should not write on a fixed plan, but adopt such subjects as occasionally arose in my own mind, or were suggested by your inquiries.

Every thing connected with the true dignity of nobility falls within my design. Literature is certainly connected with it most intimately. It opens the eyes to every thing beautiful, to all that is wise and great and good among mankind. It renders one man as superior to another, as man in general is superior to a brute.

But, my Lord, I never intended to make you a mere scholar. I wished to furnish you with literature sufficient to enable you, by a general knowledge, to prosecute your inquiries with success into all subjects that may solicit your notice; to give you sound principles of arts, sciences, and polite letters; so that you may be able to support your dignity, to serve your country, and to employ your leisure pleasantly and profitably, without running into intemperance or extravagance merely to pass away your time. I wished you to become a man of science and a man of taste, that you may become amiable in the intercourse of common life, and esteemed and honoured, independently of your birth, in public. I

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wished you to be able to find the sources of amusement and happiness in yourself, without being driven, in distress for something to do, to mere frivolity. I wished you to find satisfaction in conscious virtue, and in contemplation; and not to depend on others, the paltry ministers of pride and luxury, for the means of avoiding the languor of inactivity. I was desirous that you should lay up a store of ideas for the rest of your life; that you should have means of enjoyment in your library, in times of infirmity, and in old age. My intention was to polish your mind, to ennoble your heart; to add weight to your character by solid qualities, and cause the graces of your external manners to be the genuine emanation of internal elegance. Such was my intention in urging you to literary application. You need not fear the being too learned. The manners of the times, and the numerous avocations both of business and pleasure, which you will experience in your exalted rank, will never permit such a degree of application, as can render your learning an incumbrance. The more you are able to acquire in your youth, depend upon it, the happier and the more honourable you will live. The world values at a high rate the virtuous qualifications of a nobleman. They appear with double lustre in an exalted station, where temptations to idleness and luxury are powerful. Jewels well set in gold are prized beyond the mere intrinsic value.

I hope, therefore, that so long as you enjoy life, health, and your faculties, you will devote some part of the day, however small a part, to the study of science or polite literature. Your acquisitions are already considerable, and constant attention to their preservation and extension, will render you, without painful labour, superior in attainments to most of your compeers. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXVII.

My Lord,

It can scarcely have escaped your observation, that science has been carried to great heights of improvement by men who are enemies to monarchy, enemies to religious establishments, and enemies to the order of nobility. Their knowledge and their virtues have given them a personal weight and influence in the world, that few noblemen, however ancient their families, and large their estates, are able to counterpoise. The influence of many noblemen extends scarcely beyond their own tenants or a few rotten boroughs; but the influence of these poor plebeians, ennobled only by their own labours in their libraries, has extended, and is at this moment extending, all over Europe and America. You see political phenomena which our fathers could never have predicted. Extensive empires, without kings, without nobles, without bishops. Whether for the good of mankind or not, it is a wonderful effect of personal exertion. Writers may be proud of their power; for they have done what all the kings and nobles in the world, with the assistance of standing armies, could never have effected. Would you avoid innovations in England? Would you preserve the magnificent Gothic pile of our ancestors uninjured? Then add personal merit to the aristocracy. Let genius, learning, and virtue, outshine the pearls and jewels of the peer's coronet; and this country will still, such are its prepossessions in favour of nobility, honour and support it.

To make a solid improvement in science, and even to judge of the improvements made by others, it is

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necessary that you should make a proficiency in mathematics; a subject which I shall resume in my next letter. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXVIII.

My Lord,

Think not that I shall advise you to grow pale over complicated diagrams and long calculations, like some poor Philomath, in the unsocial cells of a college. I recommend the study of the Mathematics to you as preparatory to useful exertions in active life. In the first place, they are the best Logic. They superinduce habits of attention, precision, and accuracy of reasoning, on all subjects which fall under our consideration.

But in the next place, they are necessary as instruments in attaining to the noblest sciences. There can be no doubt of their value and utility. Begin then, my Lord, with resolution not to be deterred by the idea of difficulty. There is a delight in the evident truth elicited by this study, which more than repays all the labour. Strong minds love strong exercise, and feel their vigour augmented by a conflict with difficulty.

You are already a proficient in Arithmetic. But you will do well to secure your attainments in this science, by a repetition of your past studies in it. Algebra will next claim your attention; and it is superfluous to recommend to you the volumes of Professor Saunderson.

If you choose an easy introduction to the Mathematics, let me recommend to your attentive perusal, the three volumes of Dr. Wells. That author has a clear and very happy mode of instruction. Deep



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mathematicians will despise a mere elementary book like his; but you, who are in search of the easiest methods of attaining to science, will condescend to use the most obvious and unostentatious assistance.

After reading Wells, go through Euclid's Elements with close attention; and then, as you are not to be a professor, you will have Mathematics enough for all your purposes. If, indeed, you feel in yourself a genius for Mathematics, pursue them with the perseverance of a Newton. All natural propensities to science are to be indulged without restraint. But if I were to advise you to involve yourself in the abstruser studies of Mathematics, the utility of which seems to terminate in speculation, what is to become of our statesman, our orator, our patriot? No; life is short, art long, health precious. I cannot urge you to spend your time and spirits in studies, the result of which, after all your labour, will only afford a little amusement to a few recluse students in one or two universities.

The Mathematics you acquire, are to lead you to judge of Astronomy, Navigation, Fortification, Architecture, useful Mechanics, Revenue, Tactics, National Wealth, Arts, and Manufactures.

You must have the assistance of living instructors for improvement in all these branches of knowledge. But the principles you must acquire from books. Cultivate an acquaintance with the ablest men in every department, and their conversation and advice will greatly abridge the labour of study; but study you must in the first instance, in order to be qualified to benefit by their instruction. Happily the nation abounds with men deeply versed in Natural and Experimental Philosophy. A nobleman may easily draw out their rich stores, by soliciting their acquaintance. It is one great advantage of high rank,

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that men of merit are always ready to repay the countenance they receive from it, by the most liberal communication of that excellence which their talents and labours have acquired, but which no money can purchase, and no monarch bestow. Let the coronet be respectfully taken off, especially in youth, to plebeian heads adorned with genius and science. It will be replaced, and shine with additional brilliancy.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XXXIX.

My Lord,

I did promise you a letter upon History. But why need I urge you to study it? You know its value to a statesman and an orator. It is indispensably necessary. But it is a most extensive field. A life may be spent in traversing it. You never can, consistently with your other engagements, read the history of all ages and all countries. The life of an antediluvian, and the constitution of one, would be necessary to read attentively, all that have been written on History alone, much more to study all the sciences and parts of knowledge which I have already recommended.

What must be done? *Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo multa?* My Lord, grasp as much as you can; and what you cannot hold or reach, must be suffered to escape. An avarice of knowledge is a laudable avarice indeed; but yet, even here, contentment must be learned, if we would be happy. Alps on Alps arise. But if we cannot reach the summit, we may reach some desirable eminence, enjoy a noble prospect, and sit down, if we are wearied, far more elevated, and more rationally happy than the shep-



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herd in the vale. Our view is greatly extended, though we still know that our sensible horizon falls infinitely short of the rational.

Let us endeavour to abbreviate our historical labour, by selecting whatever is useful, and foregoing whatever may be dispensed with, though entertaining to the imagination, and calculated to gratify curiosity.

You must read the Grecian, the Roman, the English historians, and the history of modern Europe. No man can pretend to letters who is utterly unacquainted with these.

We have abundance of histories of Greece and Rome compiled by the moderns. But my advice is, "go to the fountain-head." Read Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, and Tacitus; or, if you will drink at the streams, read Rollin; after these read whatever historian you best approve, remembering, as I have more than once repeated, that what you read from choice and inclination, will make the deepest impression, and be retained the longest in the memory. Only give me leave to say, that as there is such choice of historians, you should read those chiefly that have written in the most classical style, lest in acquiring information you contract a barbarism of language, and impede your progress toward one grand purpose of your studies, parliamentary eloquence. Great stores of eloquence are to be derived from Livy. His speeches are full of weight and dignity; and he who can imitate them successfully, will always be impressive.

There is a great deal of history very uninteresting. This must be studied, if studied at all, in chronological tables, and referred to when occasion requires, by dictionaries and indexes. I cannot consent that a warm and vivid genius like yours should be chilled

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by mere dates, proper names, and dull matters of fact. Survey those historical pictures, where the drawing is strong, and the colouring rich; and you will receive such pleasure as will fix the transactions indelibly in your memory. The faint narrations of uninteresting events will waste your time, and soon vanish from your mind. They are only fit for dull *matter-of-fact* men.

Modern History, whether from the inferior genius of the historians, or the little heroism of modern manners, is far less striking to the imagination than ancient; but to a statesman it is highly useful. Procure the best historians of every country. Your own will of course claim your peculiar attention. Many complain that we have no good historian of our country. You will consult the most approved; and fame points them out sufficiently to your notice. Rapin, Hume, Robertson, Smollet, and the authors to whom they refer in their margins, will furnish you with as much knowledge in this province as you can easily retain. As to party, you must judge for yourself how far it misled the minds of these popular writers. As a critic and man of taste, I think you will agree with me that we have not yet a classical writer of English history. Where are the living pictures of Livy? But information must be obtained, whether the modes of receiving it are pleasant or disgustful.

Voltaire writes modern history in an entertaining manner; and to him you will have recourse. The difficulty will be to prevail upon yourself to read dull annalists, dreary treaties and negotiations, and dry proceedings of councils, conventions, and senates. But if necessary to your own honour and your country's, you will submit with patience to the toil: I wish you soon to emerge from the dark mine to pleasanter

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scenes, where not only reason and memory are exercised, but the imagination delighted.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XL.

My Lord,

You tell me that you again incurred the derision of your company. They laughed at the downfal of nobility in England. They think it so unlikely as to be next to impossible; and they treated with contempt your wish that they would unite with you in rendering it more respectable in the eyes of the public. They sent you, as you express it, to Coventry; they called you a pedant, and pretended to think you a fool.

These nobles, your companions, perhaps three or four years ago, would have laughed at the idea of the dethronement of the Grand Monarque, and the abolition of nobility in France. They once would have laughed at the idea of American independence. Ridicule is entertaining; but furnishes no argument. You see facts, my Lord, equally or perhaps more unlikely, than the abolition of nobility in England, have taken place in other countries. It never can be unwise to take timely precautions. All who understand the real state of this country, know that there are many in it who wish to see the order of nobility abolished. They are no less indefatigable than sagacious in pursuing their objects; and the spirit of the times, and the great events which have recently happened, are certainly favourable to their purposes.

What remains but that the nobility prove to the world that their order is really beneficial to society?

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And how can they do this more effectually, than by rendering themselves as superior in public virtue, and useful learning, as they are in civil preeminence? Personal merit is a claim to superiority, which the most clamorous leveller cannot dispute. Insignificance, crowned with a coronet, dwelling in a magnificent house, riding in a splendid coach, with arms on the side, and attended with crowds of liveried hirelings, will, in this age, be despised by all who are not in some mode or other paid for their obeisance; and when this contempt becomes general, what shall support an order of men originally raised above their fellows, by an opinion of the superior worth and virtue of their ancestors?

Let your merry companions laugh as they please, they must in their hearts esteem you, and all, who like you, are endeavouring to equal or to exceed the first founders of their family. Go on then confidently. If any thing can save the tottering fabric from falling, it is such a column, at once graceful and massy, as I hope you will one day appear in the eyes of all men.

Who knows not that human affairs, after our best endeavours, will ever remain far below perfection? Who requires to be told that man, however elevated, is still an infirm, frail, erring creature; and that noblemen are still subject to all the frailties flesh is heir to? Yet society will always expect, that those who enjoy peculiar privileges should, in the main, and upon the whole, notwithstanding a few exceptions, appear to deserve them, by returning services for advantages enjoyed, and distinctions claimed. What is society the better because certain men are adorned with titles, and eat more delicately, and dwell more sumptuously, and ride more splendidly, and reclining in haughtiness and lazy luxury, look

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down with contempt on the virtuous and industrious tribes, who, by their labours, are really increasing the comforts of life, and diminishing its evils? Noblemen, regardless of themselves and the public, and degenerated to grooms and gamesters and gluttons, will not be for ever tolerated in a country where taxes are high and the press free. Therefore, if the maintenance of the order is desirable to themselves, they must shake off a most dishonourable indolence, and become what their ancestors were supposed to have been, when they were separated by privileges from the mass of citizens.

Independently of all political considerations, and all regard to the honour and duration of their order, I am sure that as men they will feel themselves happier, by a life of active virtue and extensive beneficence. There is every reason to urge them to labour in improving their minds and exalting their nature. And as the corruption of the best things becomes the worst, degenerate nobility is infinitely baser than plebeian depravity or vulgar insignificance.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLI.

My Lord,

Your mention of those companions, who laugh at your regular application to letters, and your generous aspirations after every excellence, leads me to consider the importance of associating with men of enlightened minds and respectable characters.

A nobleman like you, enjoys the inestimable privilege of selecting his company from the mixed multitude. You are right indeed to select pleasant companions; for as men meet in society for mutual

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delight, the very purpose of their meeting would be frustrated by associating with the morose.

But be assured that the pleasantness of a companion does not always depend upon his levity. Mirth and jollity may pass away a vacant hour in thoughtlessness; but good sense, information, taste and wit, are necessary to give society its highest relish. Remember too, that your company should have the advantage of character, if you value your own.

I hope therefore, that you will not give yourself up, like some whom the public speaks of freely, to the society of men whose knowledge is confined to jockeyship, making of bets, feasting, playing, boxing, cock-fighting, cricketing, and other frivolous amusements, from which the people at large can receive no advantage; which often promote riot and disorder; which produce no good and mitigate no evil. Are noblemen allowed exclusive privileges, and loaded with riches and honours, that they may patronise and countenance those whom the middle rank, occupied in honest industry, consider as little better than vagabonds and outcasts of society? They may be pleasant, honest fellows in their way, but the public despises them; and they will involve those of the nobility who are always seen with them, in that contempt into which themselves have fallen, never more to rise.

It is said that very great men often delight in the company of very little men, and that princes and nobles are remarkable for their attachment to worthless company. What can be the causes? Among others, this perhaps is one. Nobles, not furnished with personal merit corresponding with their elevation, are afraid of sinking in the presence of persons who are distinguished by great talents natural and

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acquired. To preserve their rank at the convivial table, they think it best to associate with men whose humble acquirements and contemptible characters do not encroach upon their self-importance. But this is a double misfortune; a misfortune to themselves, who are thus excluded from the pleasure and advantage of company really good; and a misfortune to men of merit, who are suffered to live unpatronised and unnoticed by those, who lavish all their favours on their contemptible parasites. There is no conduct of the nobility which exasperates the honest and independent part of the people more, than this degrading predilection for men, who, however pleasing they may be as buffoons, are devoid of all qualities which excite public respect, and promote public benefit.

Such is my opinion of your good sense, and of the taste of excellence which you have imbibed from a voluntary perusal of the best authors, that I hope and think my admonitions on this subject may be unnecessary. But the example of young men of your own rank is seducing, and I am unwilling to omit any topic that may be beneficial.

Let me then exhort you to form a habit of association with men of letters and science, with men eminent in the liberal professions, with men whom the public esteems, and on whose account the public will esteem you, if you are known to seek and to enjoy their conversation.

"The feast of reason," is one of the most delightful pleasures allowed to man in this imperfect state. Invite guests who are able to bring their share of the entertainment. Keep open house for all who come recommended by indubitable merit. But take care not to admit forward pretenders, who will be the first to rush in, to the entire exclusion of modest

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unpresuming men, who must be drawn with a kind of gentle violence from their obscurity.

Patronise real worth. How few among the nobility are patrons of illustrious merit? There are who pretend to be so, and bestow their favours on doubtful claims; on men who are chiefly remarkable for a mean obsequiousness, and whom the public scarcely recognise as men of any merit at all. There is an honest pride in real worth which delights in independence, and scorns to solicit favours of the unworthy. This pride, though really estimable, offends the little minds of narrow nobility. Men of great merit are therefore kept at a distance; while sycophantic pretenders, favoured by the ignorance as well as mean spirit of titled persons, (for to call them noble would be a misnomer,) enjoy the hospitality, the conversation, and the lucrative appointments of those who are raised to higher ground, that they may see, and seeing, may reward all real virtue in the vale beneath them.

As you must have observed how this conduct degrades individual noblemen, and disgraces the order, you will, notwithstanding the force of example, carefully avoid it. Mæcenas, though a coxcomb, had sense enough to patronise such men as Horace; and their merit has ennobled with immortality of fame his native insignificance. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLII.

My Lord,

I have not forgotten that I promised you a letter on Philosophy. Her name is abused in the present age, but she herself must ever be estimable. True philosophy is true wisdom.

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Many men assume to themselves the title of philosophers, who are very superficially furnished with learning or science; and who rely entirely on the strength of their own reason, and the short experience of their own lives. As an instance of their superiority, they controvert all the opinions which have been long established among mankind, as prejudices. They may sometimes be right in abstract theory; but they would do well to consider whether the removal of prejudices, which for ages have been found beneficial to mankind at large, conducive to good order, exciting merit, raising emulation, and affording comfort and amusement, is not as unworthy of philosophy, as it is of benevolence. Austere in their manners, uncandid in their judgment, dogmatical in their doctrines, they are not to be imitated by a learned, generous, liberal-minded, good-natured nobleman. Their philosophy is not the philosophy which I recommend to your Lordship. It is too mean for a mind cultivated by elegant letters, polished by the fine arts, and attentive to whatever embellishes as well as informs the fine faculties of the human intellect. It is founded on metaphysical refinement, narrow calculation, parsimonious economy, and, upon the whole, unfit for a creature furnished with fine feelings and an imagination, as well as with reason. It allows nothing to ornament, little to pleasure, and keeps the eye steadily fixed, like the sordid miser, on mere worldly utility. It is inimical to the honourable distinctions of rank. It would strip all the gold and carving from the roof, as an appendage which adds nothing to the solidity of the edifice.

You, my Lord, will derive your philosophy from the sources of all elegance, the polished writers of the best ages of antiquity. You will find a spirit in them which ennobles man's nature. Plato, Xenophon,

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Cicero, and those of the moderns who have trod in their footsteps, will be your masters in philosophy; and while you catch their sentiments, you will imitate their example. They were noble by Nature's patent. They stand among the minute philosophers of recent times like giants among pigmies.

Theirs is the school for the acquisition of dignity. Greatness of soul is more necessary to make a great man, than the favour of a monarch and the blazonry of the herald; and greatness of soul is to be acquired by converse with the heroes of antiquity; not the fighting heroes only, but the moral heroes; those who wrote and acted with grace and spirit which few modern philosophers of the minute school, with all their assuming pretensions, have fully understood, or been able to emulate.

To the ancients I refer you for a just taste of the beautiful and sublime in manners and morals, as well as in composition. Plato, Xenophon, Plutarch, Tully, Seneca; be these your guides in philosophy. After drinking at their fountains, you will learn not to overvalue the shallow streams and narrow rivulets of the *soidisant* philosophers of recent times. You will have a touchstone to discriminate infallibly between gold and baser metal. You will see the essential difference, however speciously disguised, between sophistry and philosophy.

Under philosophy in this Letter, your own good sense will inform you, that I do not mean natural and experimental philosophy. The moderns excel the ancients in these particulars, as much as manhood usually excels childhood, or adolescence.

I mean the philosophy which Cicero calls *vitæ dux, virtutis indagatrix;* and of which he says, in a beautiful apostrophe to her, *Tu inventrix legum, tu magistra morum et disciplinæ. Est autem unus dies*

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*benè ex preceptis tuis actus—peccanti immortalitati anteferendus.*

It is that philosophy which separates, by a moral chemistry, truth from falsehood, right from wrong, dispelling the clouds of error, and dissolving the enchantments of fancy.

To her guidance I commend you, my Lord, and doubt not but that she will conduct you to the pulchrum et honestum, to all that truly ennobles human nature. She will lead you, I hope, ultimately to what modern philosophy explodes, the Christian religion. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLIII.

My Lord,

You think I am beginning to preach, when I mention religion. But why a prejudice against any mode of instruction? Indulge it not; for it is unworthy a man of sense, and a philosopher.

I am indeed going to preach, if to recommend religion be to preach. You may be a good man, and a happy man, without nobility, without learning, without eloquence; but you cannot be either without religion. Without religion there will be a root of bitterness shooting up amidst your choicest fruits, that will not fail to spoil their flavour. Those who possess the largest share of the world, and are totally immersed in its pleasures, are not so happy upon the whole, as the contented peasant with his piety.

For your own comfort therefore, I trust you will cultivate a spirit of devotion; that you may enjoy peace of conscience, and the sweet hope of protection from the King of kings, in the thousand sorrows which, as you are not destitute of sensibility, you will feel in the course of a chequered life. High

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as you are, you are not out of the reach of misfortune. Those you love as your own soul may die before you, or be afflicted with pain and disease that admit of no alleviation. You may drink deeply of the bitter cup yourself. Years of pain may be your lot. Your senses will certainly decay, if you live long. The world with its pomps and vanities will gradually vanish from you, like a cloud in a summer evening, tinged with gold and purple.

Is it not worth while to cultivate in youth a devotional taste, which in health and prosperity will furnish you with great pleasure; and in distress, sickness, age and death, with solid comfort, when nothing else can give any delight; but when grandeur, as well as riches, will appear despicable vanity?

And look a little beyond this world, (and leave it you must, whether you choose it or not,) and see what scenes religion opens to the eye of faith! Hope points to them in the last agonies of expiring nature. Were it but a delusion, (and you can never be sure that it is not a reality, without an immediate revelation,) it would be worthy of cherishing in this mortal state: but that it is not a delusion you have great reason to believe, because it is supported by strong arguments; because the best and most enlightened men of all ages have been religious, and on their death-beds, in their last accents, have left a testimony in its favour.

But if you dislike preaching, I doubt not but you have a peculiar objection to long sermons. To conclude therefore, I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLIV.

My Lord,

The subject of my last is of too much consequence not to be resumed.

Man is instinctively a religious animal. Others approach him in reason, but none have an idea of a God. Many of them, as the dog, look up to man with a species of adoration, resembling that with which he looks up to the Deity. This religious instinct in man is a certain proof of that dignity of human nature, which the modern philosophers are endeavouring to depreciate.

But those who claim a dignity among their fellow-creatures, will never, if they are wise, study to lower the dignity of the whole race. If there be no dignity in human nature, there can be none in any partaker of it. Nobles will act wisely in maintaining religion in its full vigour, if they should be actuated solely by selfish or political motives.

If man be a reptile, incapable of sustaining a character at once good and great, how ridiculous to put a coronet on his head, and clothe him in purple! They are the greatest levellers, who aim at levelling man with the brute. If we are all asses, no ass among us will long be permitted to wear a lion's skin.

Indeed, poor human nature, with all its dignity, stands in need of every support to prevent it from falling beneath itself. Whatever can raise it from the savage and barbarous state, ought to be cherished. The wild crab-stock must be grafted with the pippin.

I wish your religion not to be a political one, but the spontaneous growth of a good and feeling heart.

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Yet even a political reverence for the religion of your country is far more honourable to a nobleman, raised or maintained as he is in his elevation for his supposed virtue, than an open contempt of it. Depend upon it, that some instances of this sort have given disgust to the people. All the eloquence and ability of Bolingbroke have not been able to rescue his name from infamy. And what will be thought of those little great men, who blaspheme in public, and avow themselves infidels, with scarcely any learning, and no peculiar share of common sense? Such men are sapping the foundations of nobility, on which it has stood firmly for ages.

A religion too evidently political will usually be frustrated. The public, ever keenly penetrating into the conduct of distinguished personages, will see that it is merely political, and then what becomes of the policy of it? It may do more injury than open impiety, because it renders all professions of religion throughout society suspected of policy, and causes religion itself to be considered as a state engine. The engine will lose its spring, and become a piece of lumber, when once the suspicion is universal.

Be therefore in truth what you wish to appear. Are you exempted from the common lot of humanity? Do you not want consolation which the world often has not to give? None are more wretched than the great. A thousand causes increase that portion of misery in them, of which all mortals must partake. They want the spur to industry which urges their inferiors to action, and consequently makes them happy. Their appetites are palled with abundance. They are exposed to a thousand temptations, happily unknown to the vulgar. They are often brought up in ignorance of all things but those which solicit their senses. And shall they, proud of a little



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temporary distinction, despise that which myriads of their fellow-creatures have found to be a light to lighten their paths; a medicine for sickness of mind, the most distressing of all languors; a vulnerary to heal the severest wounds of the bosom?

You have too much sense not to see the vanity of all human things; the brevity of life; the weakness of man in his best estate; the poverty of riches, and the littleness of grandeur. Seeing and feeling these things, you will aspire at something greater, something better, something more satisfactory and more durable, than this fading scene, and this perishable body, are able to afford. You will see a sublimity in religion, a true grandeur in all its views; and you will wish to be impressed with it, that your soul, your very essence may be refined, sublimed, and truly ennobled. Little minds, the half learned, the empty and the conceited, are the pronest to infidelity and irreligion. A really great mind, a mind adorned by the lights of learning, and a heart finely sensible of all that in its most perfect state it ought to feel, will acknowledge with all humility its own want of support, and aspire with ardent hope to the favour of the Deity.'

And let me entreat you to keep in mind, that religious impressions must be stamped early in life; because there is great danger that the heart may become too much hardened in the world, to admit them in advanced age. The sooner you adopt pious sentiments, the better: but because the outward appearances of religion are often suspicious, often the cloaks of hypocrisy, you will take care to avoid the ostentation of piety. Indeed, there is not much danger of it in the present times: it is so much exploded in some circles in high life, that many a young man of gaiety and fashion would

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rather be suspected of every extravagance and folly, than of saying his prayers, or paying a sincere respect either to the public or private offices of devotion. To avoid the suspicion of hypocrisy, your piety will be more in your heart than on your tongue; and your intercourse with Heaven will be carried on with little other privity, (except on Sundays and in the church,) than that of your own conscience.

This subject is too extensive and too important for a familiar letter; I can only give you hints upon it; you must improve them by reading and reflection. Give me leave to send you for instruction to the great masters of theology in our own language; to Barrow, whose copious eloquence would adorn a senate; to South, whose wit, and sound argument, and energetic style, will improve you in speaking, while it convinces your reason, confirms your faith, animates your zeal, and inspires your heart with manly sentiments of duty to yourself, your neighbour, and your God. I mention eloquent writers, that you may not lay aside a volume of sermons, with the usual complaint of dulness. More lively writers than Barrow and South are not to be found in the English language. I fear, if I should recommend dull tomes of divinity, however sound, I should stand no chance of being regarded.

But why should you not have a theological library? Do you think divinity concerns the clergy only? It concerns man, as man; and he has poor pretensions to the character of a nobleman, whose narrow prejudiced mind leads him to think, that divinity is interesting to none but men who follow it as a lucrative profession.

Hebrew I do not recommend to you; because you cannot comprehend in your plan every thing that is desirable. But pray furnish yourself with a



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Septuagint Bible, a Latin Bible, and an English one, of the best edition. Procure Wetstein's and Bengelius's testaments. Set apart a bookcase in your library, for the best writings of celebrated laymen of our own country in divinity; such as Locke, Addison, Nelson, West, and Lyttelton: and be not ashamed of admitting among them, the celebrated writers of sermons, whose compositions, considered only as fine pieces of literature, deserve a place in every good library.

The time may come, when you will find this part of your collection the most agreeable. In old age it will furnish much comfort. Happy for you it will be, if in your youth you divest yourself of those prejudices against religion and religious books, which, unworthy as they are of a truly philosophic and noble mind, are cherished as marks of superiority over the vulgar! You must die like the vulgar; you have nerves susceptible of pain and languor like the vulgar; you may be judged and condemned like the vulgar; deign therefore to worship and obey the God of the vulgar. Before his eyes in what light do you think appear coronets, ribands, and stars? A book, of some authority with the people, though sometimes neglected by the great, says, "Not many noble are called."—That they are not, must be their own fault, for God is no respecter of person. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLV.

My Lord,

Give me leave to write you one more letter on Religion, and I will desist, lest I should find you throw away my letters, as you say Lord * * * did your Barrow's Sermons, when he called upon you to desire

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you to take ten guineas' worth of tickets for the benefit of Siguior * * * *.

A nobleman has no right to retain his distinctions, when he refuses to perform on his part those duties in society, which the conferring or continuing of those distinctions tacitly requires of him. He promises by retaining the honours bestowed, to reflect a lustre back again on his country; and to contribute what he can to the maintenance of its constitution, both civil and ecclesiastical. An open avowed contempt of the religious ordinances of a country, where he is peculiarly favoured, is an insult which the people feel, and when opportunity offers, will show that they can resent, by degrading his order.

What think you then, my Lord, of the fashionable practice among nobles, of selecting Sunday, in preference to all other days, for travelling? What passes on Sundays within the walls of our patricians' mansion-houses, even if it should be improper, (which is not to be uncharitably surmised,) when it is not seen by the public, may neither do them harm by the example, nor degrade nobility in their opinion. But splendid equipages flying about the country on Sundays, during divine service, with coronets on the coach doors and on the horses' caparisons, betray an insolence, which the majesty of a people, not yet lowered by atheism, will one day curb, in a manner which may render the lordlings who sport them, objects of pity. The honest husbandman stops his plough, the weaver his loom, the smith quenches his fire, and the carpenter lays down his hammer, in obedience to the laws of his country, and for the preservation of decorum; but the great lord in the neighbourhood, an hereditary maker and guardian of the laws, and one who expects great worship to be paid to himself, sets out on Sunday, on his jour-

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ney to London or a place of amusement; though as he is totally unemployed, he might with equal convenience to himself, travel on any other day. He takes with him five or six menial servants, and six or seven horses, who are driven with cruel haste, as if life and death depended on the saving of an hour; when the whole business of the journey is, that one lord may sit down and eat and drink with another lord, then yawn on a sofa, and finish the evening with faro. Should an aristocracy thus insult a generous and religious people, let it not imagine itself founded on a rock.

If nobles are anxious to hand down their honours, as they received them, unsullied and unimpaired, let them pay a scrupulous regard to public decorum. A free people will not for ever be insulted by those, whose useless state, and luxurious indolence, they support by their labour. Some nobles may thank themselves alone for that levelling spirit, which prevails in Europe, and, without great efforts of virtue among the nobles, will triumph.

I hope, for your own sake, you will not have routs and card-parties on Sundays; but that you will spend the day according to the laws and customs of your country: however, if you will not do so for your own sake, let me prevail with you to do it for the sake of your order; and for the sake of the common people, who have their eyes fixed on your conduct, and, in spite of all laws and all advice, will imitate it, though they despise it in you, and though it tends to the destruction of their health, their characters, and their properties. If you wish yourself and your posterity to preserve the nobility you inherit, support it, my Lord, by behaviour uniformly noble, and publicly decorous, as well as privately good, and internally honest. *Let your light shine before men*, or it may be extinguished. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLVI.

My Lord,

Pride often affects to despise, and may sometimes really despise, popularity. But it is a silly pride: for what is popularity but the favour, the love, and the esteem of the people; those of our fellow-creatures who are destined to exist on this globe at the same time with ourselves, and who have it greatly in their power to render our lives comfortable or uncomfortable, honourable or disgraceful? Next to the approbation of our God and our consciences, is the esteem of our fellow-creatures.

Every nobleman should endeavour to be popular. If his disposition lead him to rural retirement, yet he should become the favourite of his neighbourhood, beloved by the poor, and esteemed by all. Is this commonly the case? Go into countries where mansion-houses of the nobility abound; ask the neighbours their opinion of the lord at the great house. A shake of the head often speaks eloquently, when the tongue, through fear of the great man's persecution, is compelled to be silent. But, in general, the neighbours neither love nor fear the great man, and are loquacious enough at his expense. "My Lord is very strict about the game," says one. "My Lord does but little good with his great fortune," says another. "My Lord is scarcely ever here," says a third, "but always in London, or at a watering-place."—"So much the better," cry they all, "for he gives nothing away, and associates with few but gamblers, who follow him into the country, as the crow follows the carrion." The great man brings London with him to the sweet village retreat, where

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nature and simplicity once reigned, but whence they are driven by false refinement, or gross luxury. The pleasures he enjoys there are all selfish, or confined to a circle of companions whom the country-people view with contempt or hatred. What becomes of his popularity? He despises it—he is above it. The low people in his neighbourhood, even those who are what his ancestor was, are beneath his notice. The contempt is reciprocal. His lordship will do them no good, and he can do them no hurt; but they have it in their power to injure him deeply, by speaking of him on all occasions disrespectfully. Thus, his character suffers; and his honour, one of the most valuable possessions of a nobleman, is sullied by foul aspersion. The very order is held in contempt on his account; and, however he may despise this evil, yet let him be assured, that it is in its consequences of considerable magnitude. The contempt spreads, from a rural neighbourhood, to the whole community; as the undulating circles, caused by the falling of a pebble into a pond, extend themselves gradually to its remotest margin.

I advise you therefore, my Lord; you, who are willing to retard the degradation of nobility, to reside at your provincial mansion in a style of magnificence adequate to your rank and fortune, and with an hospitality and beneficence that may compel envy herself to acknowledge, that you are no less noble in your nature, than by the accident of primogeniture in a patrician family.

The English are still attached to illustrious birth, and if it is accompanied with any virtue, pay it great respect. How unfortunate, that some nobles do all they can to eradicate the prejudices, which the people retain for them, by showing that they have no pretensions to distinction or superiority, but the wretched

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ness of an hereditary fortune, which they dissipate in mischief; and an hereditary title, to which they are a disgrace!

A nobleman in the country should be looked up to by the vulgar with admiration, by the gentlemen and clergy with esteem and affection, and considered by all, as the universal friend; and this, not for the paltry purposes of a county or borough election, but for the sake of supporting the dignity which the laws of his country have consented that he shall inherit or possess, certainly not for his own good only, but for the good of the society. Why should I agree, says a free citizen, to exalt my fellow-creature above me, unless I am to enjoy the benefit of his protection, his bounty, or his good example?

Largesses bestowed for the sake of influencing votes, or condescension shown at the approach, or at the time of an election, gain no permanent popularity: they are seen through, and known to proceed from selfishness, meanness, and a contemptuous opinion of the very persons to whom they are offered. They are a cheap and dishonourable way of purchasing favours that cannot be bought and sold without betraying the country. Your kindness will proceed from true generosity; noble in your sentiments, noble in your actions, noble in your family, you will show your compeers what it is to be right honourable. The people, instead of divesting you, will wish to bind your brows with a brighter diadem than the coronet. I trust to your natural disposition, and to your education, that even if nobility is to be abolished, the historian, who records the event, will express regret that you could not be exempted from the degradation. Indeed, you cannot be degraded. Your title may be withdrawn, your armorial ensigns effaced, but such nobility as yours will emblazon itself. It

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will, if any thing can, redeem the whole order. Such, I know, is your ambition. Indulge it; and thus emulate, equal, and surpass, the ancestor who founded your house. I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLVII.

My Lord,

I never said that aristocracy or nobility was necessary or useful in a state. It is a question which I mean not to discuss. All I contend for is, that it cannot subsist long in any free country like our own, (especially since the example of France,) when unsupported by personal merit; a merit as distinguished as the rank, and titles, and privileges, with which it is honoured. Do you think, in this age, that a peerage given to a man because he is enormously rich, and has employed his riches, in corrupting boroughs for a number of years to serve a minister, confers such honours as the people venerate? Such peerages are objects of derision among all but servile dependents, or mean and weak admirers of false grandeur. If they were unfortunately to multiply too fast, there is no doubt but they would accelerate a total abolition of such distinctions, like that which has happened, contrary to the expectations of most men, in a country which once idolized nobility.

Riches and honours, united to personal merit, will always command unlimited respect. The riches acquire double value, the honours double lustre, when accompanied with weight and brilliancy of character. On the other hand, it must be owned, that personal merit appears to very great advantage, when the splendour of those showy externals throws a kind of

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sunshine upon it. A very little merit is magnified to a very extraordinary size, when united with birth and fortune; and great merit is then sure to have ample justice done it. What an encouragement this, for noblemen to labour in their youth in acquiring personal merit?

But you justly observe, that if learning is a constituent part of this merit, it must happen among noblemen, as among all other men, that the parts necessary to acquire learning may be deficient, or may not rise above mediocrity. How then shall they acquire this personal merit, in which alone true nobility is said to consist? Personal merit, my Lord, is of a very extensive nature. A lord, we all know, may be, as well as a plebeian, a dunce; but he may still have a great deal of such merit as will vindicate himself and his order from contempt. He may do good in every useful way, though he has not abilities to strike out new modes of doing it.

If abilities are rather deficient, he may still rely for respect, with full security, on the virtues. To do good by his property, by his influence, and by his example, requires not the abilities of an orator, or a great statesman. Let him mean well in all his conduct, and the world will make every due allowance for the defects of nature.

But if, in despair of shining in his proper sphere, he descends to the low company and amusements of pugilists; appears in public with sharpers, buffoons, grooms, horse-dealers, and jockies; avoids men of sense; gives no encouragement to useful or polite arts; and degrades himself by coarse mirth, childish pranks, by excess of drinking, or any other vice; then his nobility only serves as a torch to show in a more glaring light his foul depravity.

The public, considering how frail and imperfect

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human nature ever has been, will candidly pardon, in the peerage, a few instances of such degeneracy. They will not expect superior wisdom from men who are known to be naturally below the rank of common men in ability, though accidently raised above it in station. The peerage will not be abolished on their account, if the men of parts, like your Lordship, exert themselves to render it, upon the whole, useful and honourable in the eyes of their countrymen.

But let those who cannot shine, endeavour to be useful. Beneficence, in a nobleman of dull intellect, or poor attainments, if exerted without election views, will cause him to be loved and honoured in his generation. Let those who cannot say good things, do them; and the applause, though not so obstreperous, will be more lasting and general.

The public, my Lord, require nothing unreasonable. They wish those whom they have raised above themselves, not to sink below themselves by a voluntary indolence and depravity. They wish to see them stimulated by the virtue of their ancestors to higher improvements than others, both moral and intellectual. They wish to see nobility, like Wisdom, justified by her children; and, if these wishes are never likely to be gratified, but men are to degenerate in their natural rank in proportion as they are raised in their civil, they then wish to see nobility extinct, an incumbrance cleared away, and the honour of human nature and society vindicated, by the removal of a nuisance.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLVIII.

My Lord,

I am well aware that a nobleman is but a man, and that a patent of peerage is not an apotheosis. Per-

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fection is not to be required. I never aimed at an Utopian nobility. A degree of personal merit, far below what appears in many plebeians whom we every day meet with in our common intercourse with mankind, will render a nobleman truly respectable. But the more merit he is able to acquire, the more honour, the more true nobility will he possess; and the complexion of the times is such, that personal merit was never more necessary to secure the permanency of the peerage, and to obviate the objections of shrewd and successful innovators. You agree with me in this opinion. The occurrences of the present moment prove it to be founded. Then go on in your virtuous progress, unretarded by those who say that our fears are groundless, or by those who laugh at your virtuous solicitude.

Let us proceed on the subject of your studies. You tell me, you have begun reading *Taylor's Elements of Civil Law*, which I recommended to you when I last saw you. It is indeed a book admirably well adapted to the purposes of a noble student like you, whose object is to be an efficient legislator, an enlightened statesman, a patriot unbiassed by party. To so good a classic as your Lordship, it must afford a rich entertainment, in the fine and numerous quotations from those patterns of elegance, the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is not prejudice or pedantry which extolls them. They are as superior in style to most of the modern philosophers, politicians, poets, orators, and historians, as gold is to silver. Their language gave them that advantage, and the pains they took in composition, produced a solidity of thought, as well as a highly finished expression.

Pray turn frequently to the authors referred to in the margin of Dr. Taylor's learned treatise. Procure

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a volume interleaved, and write your remarks copiously. I am a little selfish in that request; for the sight of it will afford me much pleasure, as the exercise itself will doubtless promote your own improvement. You will not consider Dr. Taylor's book as a complete treatise. It is a good common-place book in civil law; and if you examine the books to which it refers, you will possess every means of the best information in this department. You will find it an excellent collection of materials.

You have taken my advice, you say, and bought the whole works of Plutarch. You have bought a rich treasure. Plutarch is a most valuable author; full of fine sense and fine writing, too much neglected by modern readers and the self-taught philosophers. Lord Chatham said in the House of Commons, that the most instructive book he ever read was Plutarch's Lives. But the miscellaneous treatises of Plutarch abound in excellent sense, and are perhaps better worth your reading than his Lives. We have no good translation of Plutarch, and therefore you must read him in the original. Many and great beauties of style you will find in Plutarch, though the critics have decried it in general, with a traditionary obsequiousness to an erroneous opinion, hastily advanced, and not sufficiently examined.

Dwell with the sages of antiquity. You will become one of them; and adding all the dignity of a Roman, to the lights and polish of a high born and high bred Englishman, you will be one of the pillars of your country, and ornaments of the human race. May I live to see it; and have the satisfaction of thinking that my counsel contributed in some degree to finish the gorgeous column! I am, &c.

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## LETTER XLIX.

My Lord,

I met with the following passage in Lord Bolingbroke's "*Idea of a Patriot King*," on the behaviour of princes; and as it is equally applicable to nobles, I shall transcribe it for your consideration.

"Let not princes flatter themselves. They will be examined closely in private as well as in public life; and those who cannot pierce further, will judge of them by the appearances they give in both. To obtain true popularity, that which is founded in esteem and affection, they must therefore maintain their characters in both, and to that end neglect appearances in neither; but observe the decorum necessary to preserve the esteem, whilst they win the affections of mankind. Kings, they must never forget that they are men; men, they must never forget that they are kings. The sentiments which one of these reflections of course inspires, will give an humane and affable air to their whole behaviour, and make them taste in that high elevation all the joys of social life. The sentiments which the other reflection suggests, will be found very compatible with the former; and they must never forget that they are kings, though they do not always carry the crown on their heads, nor the sceptre in their hands. Vanity and folly must entrench themselves in a constant affectation of state; to preserve regal dignity. A wise prince will know how to preserve it when he lays his majesty aside. He will dare to appear a private man, and in that character he will draw to himself a respect less ostentatious, but more real, and more pleasing to him, than that which is paid to

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the monarch. By never saying what is unfit for him to say, he will never hear what is unfit for him to hear. By never doing what is unfit for him to do, he will never see what is unfit for him to see. Decency and propriety of manners are so far from lessening the pleasures of life, that they refine them, and give them an higher taste. They are so far from restraining the free and easy commerce of social life, that they banish the bane of it, licentiousness of behaviour. Ceremony is the barrier against this abuse of liberty in public; politeness and decency are so in private; and the prince, who practises and exacts them, will amuse himself much better, and oblige those who have the honour to be in his intimacy, and to share his pleasures with him, much more than he could possibly do by the most absolute and unguarded familiarity."

The sentiments of the above passage I chose rather to express in the words of a celebrated nobleman than in my own, that they might have the greater authority.

But let me appeal to your own reflection, Do you not think that great men, by breaking down the outworks of their grandeur, have endangered the citadel? Do you not think, that if an audience is permitted to go behind the curtain and the scene, much of the stage effect will be lost? And have you not observed, that many persons in very high stations have stript off all their external state, dressed in a style of vulgarity, associated with persons of no respectable character, played in public at low, degrading games, and pursued vulgar and barbarous diversions? They must have a very great fund of personal superiority to maintain, under all this voluntary abasement, the superiority which their titles arrogate, and their country allows. But unfortu-

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nately, such humiliation, such company, such amusements, have a tendency to destroy whatever personal merit, education, or early habits may have produced or improved. Nobility has let itself down, and perhaps will find it difficult to rise to its primitive elevation. What is once despised seldom resumes its honours. Contempt, like the breath of the south, taints the purest viands; and no art can restore them. That too much familiarity breeds contempt, the observation of mankind has reduced to a proverbial maxim. An institution founded, like nobility, on opinion, must be supported by opinion; and so weak is human nature, that a little paint and gilding is necessary to preserve many estimable things in a due degree of esteem. We are not yet a nation of philosophers; but we are a nation of acute observers and jealous politicians. Those who wish to enjoy the privileges of great rank must be contented to wear some of its drapery, though it may feel like an incumbrance. Strip man of his dress—and what a poor puny biped!

There is an inflation of character, an empty pomp, as far from true greatness, as the unwieldy size of a bloated glutton from the plump condition of sound health. This is displayed by men of great pride and little ability. The dignity I advise you to assume is the natural result of internal greatness; it sits easy, it gives no offence, it pleases because it is becoming, and every body pays it a willing deference.

Such nobility is of indisputable service to society. It raises a virtuous emulation. It appears with a grave and venerable air, which places the human species in a most favourable light; and by exhibiting appearances of perfection, facilitates the approach to it. Men will always imitate what they



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sincerely admire. But asses in lions skins invite the contumelious kick of every mean quadruped. I am happy that you have already taken care that no one can justly say that you have disgraced your ancestors by voluntary degradation. I am, &c.

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## LETTER L.

My Lord,

Since the first institution of nobility, a new race of nobles (pardon my calling them so) has arisen among us, unknown and unforeseen by our early progenitors. Commerce, manufactures, and our East Indian connections, have raised great numbers to princely opulence, and princely state, whom the ancient nobility would have retained in the humblest obscurity as vassals; whom too many among the modern nobility would, if possible, keep down by contempt and neglect. I say, if possible; but really, my Lord, it is impossible. Wealth, in a free country, will give power; and power, every real privilege of nobility, but the title, a poor claim to universal respect. What, then, of substantial superiority have the ancient nobility, if they do not rebuild the honour of their houses on the basis of their own personal merit? In wealth they are excelled by multitudes. In external pomp, in equipages, in mansions and attendants, in all that fascinates the vulgar, they are exceeded. Nothing exclusive remains, but the fancied advantage of patrician blood flowing in their veins; an advantage, if it be one, which does the public no service, and administers to little else but an empty pride. Personal merit, however, united to this fancied advantage, and the distinction of a title, will come recommended strongly

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to the prejudices of mankind; and there appears to me no other method of restoring the lustre of the coronet, than by adding to the number of its real jewels. False glitter will no longer pass undetected. Intellectual attainments, and patriotic exertions, will still keep the rich plebeians, who are treading upon the heels of nobility, at a convenient distance. But the purpose cannot be served by insolence and haughtiness, without merit, those common and contemptible shifts of little minds in stations too big for them.

The nobility in England have often treated the rich plebeian with a contempt which rouses a dangerous spirit of indignation. In their country retreats they often scorn the private gentleman of moderate but independent fortune, who yet possesses great influence by constant residence, and by familiar, kind, behaviour among the tenantry. They can return no visits, but among their equals; unless at the approach of a general election, when their selfish condescension is seen through, and despised as an insult; though, for the sake of private interest, it may be generally connived at and patiently borne.

The distinction which formerly subsisted between nobility and private gentlemen, or plebeians, is now lessened, not only by the more equal distribution of property, but by the dissemination of knowledge. The lower orders have frequently the advantage of patricians in education. They are compelled to submit to a discipline in their youth, to which the rich and great cannot, or rather will not conform. With conscious knowledge usually arises a certain degree of spirit, or, if you please, pride. This spirit, or pride, seems to yield with reluctance to claims of superiority founded only on hereditary titles, and unacquired property. It feels peculiar indignation



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when treated with contempt by those who have no natural claims to honour. It must, tacitly at least, wish to depress an artificial grandeur, which seems to operate, like overgrown weeds on salubrious plants, in keeping down the growth of real virtue.

To prevent the enmity of the powerful and very numerous men of property and personal merit in the middle ranks, I recommend to your Lordship great affability to them. Visit them, show peculiar favour to the most esteemed among them, and take care, by the improvements of your mind, and the generosity of your heart, to convince them that your superiority is founded not only on your ancestor's merit, but on your own; and that, if you had not been born a nobleman, you would still have been preeminent among private gentlemen by your abilities and your virtues. This desirable object is the aim of my correspondence; and I wish to see a nobility so evidently useful and conspicuously honourable, that, in spite of envy herself, the public voice may with one accord exclaim, "*Esto perpetua.*" Unless supported by great exertions, (I do not mean of military power,) the nobility of civil establishment must yie ldto the nobility of nature and virtue.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER LI.

My Lord,

Nothing has of late militated more powerfully against nobility than the publication of Lord Chesterfield's Letters. They opened the eyes of the people, and taught them to look unhurt, and with a naked eye, at that splendour, which formerly dazzled like the sun. They led men to believe, that this

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fascinating superiority, which at a distance appeared so glorious, was but an imposition on mankind, like the mimic suns and moons, thunder and lightning, in the theatre. The man who is admitted behind the scenes, and sees of what these are composed, laughs at the admiring audience.

Lord Chesterfield has let us all behind the scenes: he invites us to see the peer dress for public exhibition. There is copper instead of gold-leaf stamped on the leathern robe; glass instead of diamonds on the crown; paint, instead of health's fine tints, on the meagre cheek; and a variety of masks and disguises at hand, for all the purposes of selfish and knavish deceit. The plain honest Englishman learns to consider them who claim to be his superiors by birth and title, as founding their superiority in little else than the meanest and most contemptible cunning. Is this the wisdom of nobility? superficial attainments, a contempt for the whole species, especially the female part, a neglect of religion, a want of all public spirit, and a most anxious attention to self-interest, aggrandizement, and gratification. If man is so poor a creature, and human affairs so contemptible, and all that is passing on this globe mere juggling, then why put a coronet on any man's head, unless to mock him, as they put a cap on fools? A woollen nightcap, or a plain beaver, will afford warmth and shelter. Who would place a jewelled diadem on an ape's head, and a star on the breast of a baboon, unless to show him at a fair? If Lord Chesterfield's principles are well founded, then, in the first instance, blot out his escutcheon, abolish his title, and let him take his rank where common sense would place him, on a line with private gentlemen, unadorned and unprivileged by their country.

It is true, indeed, that Lord Chesterfield's son, to

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whom the letters were addressed, was not a nobleman. But Lord Chesterfield probably drew forth for his use the choicest treasures of his wisdom; and from them the plebeian orders are to form their ideas of that which was considered as wisdom by one of the most celebrated noblemen of his time. They are led to suspect, that similar sentiments on men and manners may prevail in others of the peerage, who display the graces with few of the virtues; and the consequence of such a suspicion is, a growing contempt for the order. They are led to think, that what they have usually admired, as all-accomplished, has been mere varnish, spread on a rotten or worthless substance. It would have been policy, in those who have nothing but the externals of nobility, to have suppressed, if possible, the letters of this graceful nobleman, whose principles have given weight to Pope's assertion,

An honest man's the noblest work of God.

A nobleman should from his heart abhor all simulation and dissimulation, as the poor shifts of ignoble meanness and cowardice. Should we venerate the lion, if he had the craft of the fox? The old Romans were true noblemen; bold, open, generous, manly; daring any thing but deceit and knavery: how would a Scipio sink in our esteem, if we saw him descending to the arts, artifices, and tricks of a Chesterfield, all for his own interest, regardless of men in general, and of his own particular society! The very dregs of the people of Rome thought and spoke nobly.

Then, my Lord, be not a Chesterfieldian. Be assured that an opener and manlier character is more pleasing to the people of England. Even supposing you to study nothing but the art of pleasing, it is the best mode to adopt such a character. Something

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of heroic virtue is expected in a nobleman. Honour without honesty, (and how can there be honesty in simulation and dissimulation?) is a contradiction. Such honour, like a counterfeit guinea, will not bear the touchstone. I am, &c.

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## LETTER LII.

My Lord,

I must respect the sentiments of whole nations; and when I see a great and mighty people, enlightened by science and polished by arts, maintaining the equality of mankind, I pause in anxious suspense for the event of such an opinion. In the mean time, I must avow my prepossession, that the happiness of society depends on a regular subordination. The golden sceptre of lawful authority is often exchanged for a rod of iron in the hand of upstart power.

Of this I am sure; the disturbance of subordination in our own country will be attended with misery unutterable to the present race. And are we, who have but a short time to live, to lose all the enjoyment of life, by losing peace and tranquillity, in order to procure an equivocal good to our posterity?

Dreadful are the evils naturally attendant on our short state of existence. Shall we multiply them by anarchy, confusion, and civil war? If reforms are necessary, (and who shall say they are not desirable?) let them be gradual, and the result of cool, dispassionate debate, and not of violence. What real benefit shall we who now live, derive from any political reform produced by the rude hand of civil war, to compensate the loss of peace, property, and blood? Let us not be carried away by political enthusiasm,

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which, like the fanatical fever of religion, spreads ruin round the land which it undertakes to deliver. Let us pursue our purposes of reformation with steady vigour, with the wisdom of cool experience; but never call the multitude to tear down by force, that which in due time will surrender at the summons of reason. Great changes in the political as well as natural body cannot safely be produced but in a length of time.

My lord, it is greatly in the power of men exalted like yourself to civil honour, and proving your right to the exaltation by personal merit, to speak peace to the troubled sea of popular commotion. Respect will always be paid to merit adorned by the lustre of family. Prove yourself a real patriot, a real philanthropist, and not a mere courtier, by relinquishing all party consideration, and standing forward the promoter of peace and good order, the friend of man, however distinguished by rank or station, the patron of human nature. You remember Virgil's fine description of the power which one man of personal authority exercises over the multitude.

The wickedness and the misery of man are strongly evinced by his restlessness, and the alacrity with which he takes up the sword, in civil tumults. Is not the world wide enough for us all to live happy in it, without shedding each other's blood? In the name of Heaven, let the sword at last be sheathed; let all rights, compatible with law and order, be amicably restored to the people; and let not the present generation sacrifice its happiness to the future, by ferocious contest.

Violence, on the part of government, will effect nothing durable. The spirit of the times requires great wisdom and great moderation in the rulers. Public virtue is called for by the exigencies of the

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state. Great men must stand forth, and subdue the multitude, not by the sword, but by persuasion. An opinion of their virtues and unfeigned patriotism must secure the confidence of the people. Personal authority, founded on an opinion of superior virtue and ability, will effect wonders.

Here then you will have an opportunity of displaying the effects of your education, the noble spirit which you have derived from the study of the ancients, and the ability you have acquired by a most diligent cultivation of your understanding. Here is a fine field for your talents. May they be exercised for your own glory and the happiness of your country.

Peace, good order, and liberty, unspoiled by licentiousness!—let the promotion and establishment of these be the scope of your honourable life.—

AGNOSCO PROCEREM. I am, &c.

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## LETTER LIII.

MY LORD,

ENGLAND was called POLYOLBION, the seat of political happiness. Read *Campbell's Political Survey*, and you will be led to contemplate the natural advantages of which it is capable. Look at it, and you will see it at this time abounding in blessings above every nation in the globe. Illuminated with science, polished with arts, enriched with commerce, agriculture, manufactures, and blessed with liberty, it is a country, in which to have been born may be deemed a favour of providence. Happily for us, who now in our turn exist on this fortunate island, it is at this time in the zenith of its glory.

Shall then, my Lord, tumult and civil war deprive us, who now live, of the feast which Heaven has

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placed before us? Let us have greater regard for ourselves, than to suffer the enjoyment of our national happiness to be destroyed or diminished by a restless desire of change, to be accomplished by violence, and with a haste incompatible with wisdom.

I mean not, in a declamatory panegyric, to assert that there is no room for reform. All independent men are agreed on that point. There is great room for reform. But a strong and venerable building may be repaired and altered, without taking it down and rebuilding it from the foundation. I would employ the best surveyors, the best workmen, and the best materials; but I should be upon my guard against those eager undertakers who would level all, lest when they come to rebuild, they should leave an edifice of brick or of wood, where they found one of stone.

The good sense of this nation will in time correct whatever is wrong in the constitution. None will suffer when wisdom and moderation guide and controul the zeal of the political reformer: but who can foretell the consequences of sudden convulsion? Alteratives will restore health in time, without the pain of amputation, or the loathsomeness of nauseous medicine.

Use your influence then, my Lord, exert your eloquence, in recommending moderation. Do not think to repress by overbearing authority the spirit of improvement which pervades and does honour to the times. It is too strong to be kept under, too warm to be stifled, too enlightened to be deceived. It will prevail. Only, let it not disturb the happiness of the present generation. Let no families be ruined, no innocent blood be shed, no public or private distress detract from the glories, and imbitter the happiness, of the intended reformation.

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May your improvements and personal merit be so great, and so well imitated by your compeers, that the hand of reform, when it comes to the peerage, may stop the uplifted axe, and spare to cut down a branch which it finds not only ornamental, but beneficial to the land by its fruits and its shade!*

I am, &c.

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## LETTER LIV.

My Lord,

Whatever revolutions on the face of this little globe may be effected by the wonderful dispensations of providence, you will never repent that you have devoted your youth to the improvement of your mind, and the formation of a character that will appear great, like the columns of some ancient city in ruins, amid the wreck of empire. The British constitution at present stands firm on the hearts of the people; but even if it should unfortunately be shaken, personal merit cannot lose its honours, and must be called forth by the exigencies of the times to honourable action and distinction.

But even in the shade of retirement, if adversity should drive you to its shelter, the knowledge you will have accumulated, and the dignity of mind you will have acquired, must render your retreat illustrious. These will furnish you with a pleasure, of which no political revolution can deprive you, in solitude and in old age.

Short is the time allotted us in this life; shorter

* Omnes boni semper nobilitati favemus, et quia reipublicæ utile est nobiles esse homines dignos majoribus suis, et quia valere debet apud nos senes, clarorum hominum de republicâ meritorum memoria, etiam mortuorum. Cic. pro Sestio.

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still the period of our activity. May we be wiser than to add misery to the short duration of our existence, by cruel tumults, by discord, by hatred, and by shedding the blood of our poor fellow-creatures, for rights, some of which are imaginary, but which, if real and possessed, would add but little to the solid comforts of each individual! Join with me in the wish, my Lord, that we may duly preserve the national happiness we enjoy; that our reforms may be temperate, the result of the maturest deliberation; and that the pen and the tongue may supersede the necessity of the sword among creatures pretending to reason. *Peace be within our walls, and plenteousness within our palaces,* and our cottages also. May science, arts, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and religion, employ our minds during our short pilgrimage, and preserve us from attempts at unnecessary changes, which, whatever influence they may have on posterity, are sure to destroy the peace and comfort of the present generation! May the great never oppress the middle and lowest ranks, and may the middle and lowest ranks never oppose the great through envy!

I adjure you, my Lord, by the honour of your ancestry, and your own, to stand forth yourself, with your compeers by your side, in defence of the constitution. But think not that to retain all its abuses and corruptions, is to defend it. Recal it to its first principles; and where it has grown sickly or infirm by age, let it be restored to rejuvenescence. Let it be put into Medea's caldron; but destroy it not; because the testimony of time and experience has pronounced that it is favourable to the happiness and improvement of human nature. Science, arts, commerce, liberty, have flourished under it in a degree envied by all Europe. Why may they not

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continue to flourish unhurt; especially when new health and vigour shall be infused into it by the political physicians in consultation? The horrid barbarism of civil war must banish every thing grateful and pleasant from the land. Rational creatures must improve society by reason. A sword is a disgrace to human nature. If we must decide our contests by brute-force, let us pull down our houses, disperse our cities, take up our abode in the woods, and feed upon acorns. In countries pretending to civilisation there should be no war, much less intestine war, which may be justly called political suicide.

They are Goths and Vandals in mind, however splendid their appearance, who delight in war. You, my Lord, have softened your disposition by the study of the fine arts, and must view with disapprobation, as well as pity, thousands and tens of thousands of poor short-lived mortals drawn up on a plain, ready to cut each other's throats for hire, at the command of a mortal as wretched as themselves, but clothed in a little brief authority. Plough-shares and pruning-hooks, axes and hammers—these are the arms of a happy, enlightened, and Christian people. Use the influence which your birth and rank give you; exert the abilities with which God and your education have furnished you, in deriving on yourself the blessing pronounced on the peace-makers.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER LV.

My Lord,

I have said nothing of your proficiency in the modern languages. It appeared to me unnecessary, because modern education dwells sufficiently on modern lan-

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guages; and I know you were initiated in French and Italian at an early period of your life; and that they had almost engrossed your attention.

I wished to impress the necessity of an acquaintance with the ancient languages and ancient authors. This was one main scope of my advice. I am confident that a real dignity of character, and the most commanding eloquence, are to be derived from the study and imitation of the ancients.

Lord Chatham formed himself on the ancients; and has the House of Peers, in modern times, exhibited one character so truly great as Lord Chatham? He stood there a colossal figure. Men of great natural sense, of great and acquired accomplishments, and of wonderful habits of business looked up to him in silent reverence, as they would survey a meteor. The truth is, he lived in his youth among the ancient Greeks and Romans. He caught their spirit, adopted their manners, and modernized their eloquence. An old Roman grafted on a modern Englishman, produced the golden fruit of true patriotism, real, personal greatness, and nobility unindebted to a genealogical table.

On these ancients I wish you, my Lord, to form yourself as on a model. Let no one persuade you that the change of times and manners will not allow such characters. What was once truly great and beautiful, will always continue so, because truth is immutable. The very rarity of such characters in modern times will add weight to their value, and brilliancy to their lustre.

The spirit of ridicule which has remarkably prevailed in latter ages, has indeed impeded the growth of truly great political characters; but against its baneful effects I have already given you a caution. You need not profess before the wag, Lord ****, that

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you are imitating an old Roman; you may keep the secret in your own bosom inviolate; but at the same time continue the imitation. In life, and in the arts, there is no method of study more successful than that of working after a model; and as the statuary copies the ancient model, so let the statesman and the orator.

Ask yourself whether such a sentiment, or speech, or action, would have become some of the patriot and heroic characters delineated in the pages of a Livy. If it would be too mean for a Scipio, discard it at once as unfit for a British nobleman. The dignity and spirit which such an emulation will inspire, will render you superior, as a Man, (the noblest distinction,) not only to those over whom you are elevated by inheritance, but to those of your compeers who are unacquainted with all models of the human character but such as are exhibited in modern history, in the three or four last centuries, when both war and civil government have been conducted by little arts, more congenial to little minds than the generous spirit of ancient republicanism.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER LVI.

My Lord,

There is a syren, whose enchanting voice may render all that I have said of no avail. Sloth is her name. Shut your ears against her song, and fly from her as from a pestilence. It is the great misfortune of rank and abundance, that it wants spurs to activity. It knows not those powerful incentives to exertion which arise from necessity struggling for abundance, or from obscurity emerging into light.

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Pains must be taken to create incentives. The desire of honour, fame, popularity, naturally stimulates the heart to laudable and useful efforts, and rouses those who else would wallow in the stye of Epicurus.

Therefore acquiesce not in the honour which your forefathers earned. To you it may be but a splendid disgrace. Therefore aspire at a well-earned fame, which may render you respected throughout life, and survive to distant ages. Therefore despise not the people, to promote whose happiness is the duty of every one who shares in government or legislation; despise not their plaudits, for they are honest rewards bestowed on merit, by hands which move in unison with hearts attached by nature, though sometimes misled by passion, to every thing upright and fair.

Let the attainment of these distinctions call you from the slumbers of indolence on the rose-beds of the Sybarites. Motives like these are indeed subordinate to the sublime ones of virtue and disinterested generosity. But in the present infirm state of human nature, they are found useful, because they operate when better ones are ineffectual. Nay, they often lead to true virtue of the purest kind. He who has once been roused to virtuous action, and tasted the sweets, not only of its consciousness, but of fame and applause, will go on in the glorious career, and finish as he began and proceeded, an honour to his country and to human nature.

Admit a little virtuous enthusiasm into your temper. Cold discretion, subtle policy, mean distrust, craft and caution, may indeed guard against danger; but they lead not, unless mixed with a little virtuous enthusiasm, to those heights of excellence, which have saved a country, by withstanding powerfully the encroachment of tyrants, and the madness of the

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people. These qualities are all consistent with selfishness. They want, and therefore cannot confer, dignity.

I am combating indolence. I can call forth no auxiliary so potent as virtuous enthusiasm. Catch the pure flame, my Lord, and let it fire all the latent sparks of virtue in your breast, those sparks which become extinct in thousands and tens of thousands, through the want of it. May it burn with steady heat, and after warming and enlightening all around you in life, burst from your urn, and while it points to heaven, diffuse a glory round your tomb, not to be rivalled by the blazonry of the herald painter! What can the chisel of the sculptor do, compared to the image engraven on the hearts of a grateful people? I admire the fine figures of Lord Chatham in Westminster Abbey and Guildhall; but I admire them for the sculptor's skill; I look not there for an idea of the Man. All the civilized world have erected monuments to him in their hearts and imaginations.

It is certain, after all, that many casual circumstances must concur to call forth extraordinary exertions, and to give universal celebrity. Those circumstances may not happen to you. But though you should not be able to eclipse all others in the cabinet, in the senate, or in the field, yet you may adorn nobility with some of its most amiable graces in the circles of private life. Every thing pleasing and beneficent, all that adds to the sweetness of domestic life, and the delight and ornament of neighbourly intercourse, will be required from you, in peculiar perfection, as a nobleman. Birth, education, privileges of various kinds, lead the public to expect in a nobleman, a gentleman of the highest polish, a philanthropist, a man anxious to do good,



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and to diffuse pleasure and satisfaction, wherever the sphere of his influence extends. But this demands great activity. Indolence will render your best intentions abortive, and cause you, amidst a thousand opportunities of pleasure, honour, and beneficence, to live and die a cypher. It will conduct you to the family vault with nothing but an "*Hic jacet*" on your tomb. Walk into Westminster Abbey, and learn to scorn such insignificance.

Yet at the same time remember, that innocent insignificance is far more estimable than mischievous abilities, and that accursed ambition which pursues fame, grandeur, and despotic power, through fields of blood. What are tigers, wolves, and hyænas to sanguinary despots? I am, &c.

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## LETTER LVII.

My Lord,

Enough of discipline. I congratulate you on your proficiency; and, with a full confidence in your good sense and good conduct, lay aside the gravity of advice. Man lives not for business alone; but to enjoy, at proper seasons, the rich repast of pleasure which the God of nature has placed before him. Think not, that in recommending application to letters, and the preservation of your dignity, I would prohibit all pursuit of pleasure. Many are the necessary intervals of study and public affairs, which cannot be more usefully employed, than in liberal, gentleman-like, rational diversions. None will have acquired a better right to such indulgences, than one who shall have spent his time in improving his mind and preserving his dignity, not to gratify pride, but that he may be found extensively useful, and

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therefore truly honourable. He requires amusements for the health of his mind, and he has a just claim to them. Is the honey to be engrossed by the idle drone, who brings nothing into the hive; who neither assists in the construction of the cells, nor the increase of stores, nor the general defence? It is not, however, necessary to urge this point, because most young men, high in rank and affluent in fortune, want no other impulse to the gaieties of life, but their own propensities to them; and are self-taught proficients in the school of pleasure.

An idea prevails among the superficial, that scholars are often destitute of the agreeable and companionable qualities; and that they think too much on all that occurs, to admit that light, airy, frivolous nothingness which passes away elegant or dissipated leisure in thoughtless gaiety. Thus dunces triumph, in their animal vivacity, over men of sense. They are loud, audacious, and unfeeling; and often reduce the modest man of genius to silence and apparent insignificance, by their unblushing effrontery. Thus, among the ladies, and in all gay society, the most accomplished young men sometimes appear below themselves, and almost yield without a contest, their claims to superiority. Now, my Lord, I wish you on no occasion to appear inferior; but, for the sake of doing justice to the solid improvements you have made, the real graces whom you have courted, to shine equally in the senate and the assembly, in the library and at the dinner-table. Polish yourself, therefore, your external manners I mean, by elegant pleasures, in chosen society.

Sacrifice to the Graces, as you have already cultivated the Muses and the Virtues. This assemblage of goddesses, rendered propitious, will unite in forming that celebrated character, seldom indeed



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seen, an all-accomplished man. I contend that in pursuing the art of pleasing, you become not an artful, crafty sycophant, renouncing, together with honesty and sincerity, all just pretensions to nobility. To appear kind and gentle and agreeable, be so. Let your brilliants bear the examination of the nicest lapidary. Let not your side-board be furnished with plated baubles, but solid silver and gold. How can a man pretend to honour, whose whole intercourse with his fellow-creatures is founded on deceit? What satisfaction in friendship and conversation can be felt by the mean man, though by abuse called a nobleman, who, in the tenderest intercourse, in his warmest professions, has been acting a part like a player; and whose mind, if it could be laid open, would, like a whited sepulchre, present rottenness to the view, and increase abhorrence by a mean endeavour to cheat the eye by concealing deformity?

To sweeten the temper, and dissipate the clouds of the mental horizon, I advise you to participate in elegant amusements. But let them not degrade, by leading you to low company; low, I mean, not only in rank, but in accomplishments, in virtue, and the liberal qualities of a liberal education. A peer may be pleased with music, without associating with fidlers; he may be delighted in theatres, without making players his bosom friends; he may admire a dancer's agility, without rendering him his confidential companion. Lord * * * * * fills his noble mansion in the summer with opera singers, French dancers, comic actors, musicians, firework makers. who dine, and sup, and sleep for months under his roof; while his door never opens to the clergy in his neighbourhood, to any of the professions, to capital artists, to men of letters and science, or to the poor. Thus he forfeits his popularity, loses

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much pleasant conversation, and renders, as far as his influence extends, the whole peerage contemptible. He must possess but little mind, who can acquiesce in the society of persons, who, whatever dexterity or agility they boast, or whatever theatrical excellence they display; are usually unprepared by education and company to become the familiar confidential associates of hereditary law-givers, high-born and high-bred peers of the realm. There are public places for all amusements, and they are there conducted with the greatest skill: he who is not contented with attending these, but chooses to domesticate the performers, evinces that he has no resources in himself; that letters, science, politics, have no charms for him; and that he is unworthy the distinctions which the laws of his country allow him, solely because his forefather earned them.

You will never be reduced to the wretched necessity of keeping buffoons in your house, if you preserve a relish for rational conversation with persons of sense and character; if you take care to cherish a taste for literature; if you partake in the common amusements, at due seasons; and, above all, if you give your attention to state affairs, to the public happiness, the proper province of a real nobleman.

In public affairs you will, I conclude, from the principles you have imbibed in the schools of antiquity, ever lean to the side of liberty and the people. Common sense dictates, and common humanity eagerly adopts the idea, that the few were made for the many, not the many for the few. Your greatness of mind will sacrifice every selfish view to the public benefit. If a reform should be required, which may render it necessary that you should give up your dominion over the borough of * * *, or that of * * *, or that of * * * *, and your influence in the county

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election, you will renounce them with alacrity, you will, if you act consistently with those ideas of justice and honour, which I know you entertain, be among the first to promote such a reform, whatever it may cost you.

Human affairs, we all know, will ever stop at a point far below perfection; but it is the business of man in society, to be ever urging the stone up the hill. Time causes every human institution to recede from its original purpose. No wonder that the constitution of a senate, established in very early times, should at length want renewal. What good and substantial reason can be assigned, why the present generation may not enjoy the benefit of its renewal, as well as some future? Not only liberty and the true spirit of the constitution are interested in a reform of parliment, but the manners of the people, and consequently their happiness, the ultimate end of all government. Corruption will no longer pervade all ranks, in every competition, from a county election to the choice of a parish beadle. Merit will dare to emerge from her shade. Truth, no longer overborne, will advance, with all her native confidence, to put in her claim to just esteem. Astræa will return from her exile. Long services, or great talents and acquirements, employed for the public good, will meet with their reward. The prizes, which justly belong to merit, will not be lavishly expended in purchasing majorities directed in their decisions by one man. Young adventurers, in all the professions, will aspire at excellence, with a prospect of honour and emolument in their mature age, even though they should want that succedaneum for every excellence, a friend;—a friend among borough-mongers, a patron among those who employ the advantages of birth and fortune, in influencing

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votes, where votes cannot be influenced consistently with honour or honesty.

You, my Lord, will worship with me in the temple of Liberty, built, as it is in England, on the massy arches of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; but if the foundation is decayed, you will, in your veneration for the goddess, endeavour to preserve her shrine from falling, and urge the people to employ the most skilful masons, the best marble, and the strongest cement in its repair.

Thus repaired, enter the temple with me, my Lord, and let us unite our voices to the general anthems of whole nations, hailing the sun of reason as it daily bursts through the clouds of prejudice, celebrating the nobility of nature and virtue, and doing willing homage to the majesty of the people, while we dutifully obey the executive powers, constituted and maintained by the nation, as guardians and protectors of the public felicity. I am, &c.

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THE

# SPIRIT

OF

# DESPOTISM.

[First printed in 1795.]

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# PREFACE.

The heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it? As far as I know my own, it feels an anxious desire to serve my fellow-creatures, during the short period of my continuance among them, by stopping the effusion of human blood, by diminishing or softening the miseries which man creates for himself, by promoting peace, and by endeavouring to secure and extend civil liberty.

I attribute war, and most of the artificial evils of life, to the Spirit of Despotism, a rank poisonous weed, which grows and flourishes even in the soil of liberty, when over-run with corruption. I have attempted to eradicate it, that the salutary and pleasant plants may have room to strike root and expand their foliage.

There is one circumstance which induces me to think that, in this instance, my heart does not deceive me. I am certain, that in attempting to promote the general happiness of man, without serving any party, or paying court to any individual, I am not studying my own interest. On the contrary I am well aware that my very subject must give offence to those who are possessed of power and patronage. I have no personal enmities, and therefore am truly concerned that I could not treat on the Spirit of Despotism, without advancing opinions that must displease the nominally great. I certainly sacrifice all view of

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personal advantage to what appears to me the public good; and flatter myself that this alone evinces the purity of my motive.

Men of feeling and good minds, whose hearts, as the phrase is, lie in the right place, will, I think, agree with me in most points; especially when a little time, and the events, now taking place, shall have dissipated the mist of passion and prejudice. Hard-hearted, proud worldlings, who love themselves only, and know no good but money and pageantry, will scarcely agree with me in any. They will be angry; but, consistently with their general haughtiness, affect contempt to hide their choler.

I pretend not to aspire to the honour of martyrdom: yet some inconveniencies I am ready to bear patiently, in promoting a cause which deeply concerns the whole of the present race, and ages yet unborn. I am ready to bear patiently the proud man's contumely, the insult of rude ignorance, the sarcasm of malice, the hired censure of the sycophantic critic, (whose preferment depends on the prostitution both of knowledge and conscience,) and the virulence of the venal newspaper. It would be a disgrace to an honest man not to incur the abuse of those who have sold their integrity and abilities to the enemies of their country and the human race. Strike, but hear, said a noble ancient. Truth will ultimately prevail, even though he who uttered it should be destroyed. Columbus was despised, rejected, persecuted; but America was discovered. Men very inconsiderable in the eye of pride, have had the honour to discover, divulge, and disseminate doctrines that have promoted the liberty and happiness of the human race. All that was rich and great, in the common acceptation of that epithet, combined against Luther; yet when pontiffs, kings,

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and lords, had displayed an impotent rage, and sunk into that oblivion which their personal insignificance naturally led to, Luther prevailed, and his glory is immortal. He broke the chain of superstition, and weakened the bonds of despotism.

I have frequently lifted up my voice—a feeble one indeed—against war, that great promoter of despotism; and while I have liberty to write, I will write for liberty. I plead weakly, indeed, but sincerely, the cause of mankind; and on them, under God, I rely for protection against that merciless spirit which I attempt to explode.

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THE

# SPIRIT

OF

# DESPOTISM.

## SECTION I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

Man in a state of simplicity, uncorrupted by the influence of bad education, bad examples, and bad government, possesses a taste for all that is good and beautiful. He is capable of a degree of moral and intellectual improvement, which advances his nature to a participation with the divine. The world, in all its magnificence, appears to him one vast theatre, richly adorned and illuminated, into which he is freely admitted, to enjoy the glorious spectacle. Acknowledging no natural superior but the great Architect of the whole fabric, he partakes the delight with conscious dignity, and glows with gratitude. Pleased with himself and all around him, his heart dilates with benevolence, as well as piety; and he finds his joys augmented by communication. His countenance cheerful, his mien erect, he rejoices in existence. Life is a continual feast to him, highly seasoned by virtue, by liberty, by mutual affection. God formed him to be happy, and he becomes so, thus fortunately unmolested by false policy and

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oppression. Religion, reason, nature, are his guides through the whole of his existence, and the whole is happy. Virtuous independence, the sun, which irradiates the morning of his day, and warms its noon, tinges the serene evening with every beautiful variety of colour, and, on the pillow of religious hope, he sinks to repose in the bosom of Providence.

But where is the man to be found, thus noble, thus innocent, thus happy? Not, indeed, in so many parts of the terraqueous globe as he ought to be; but still he is to be found wherever the rights of nature and the virtues of simplicity are not violated or banished by the false refinements, the base artifices of corrupted government.

Unhappily for man, society has been almost universally corrupted, even by the arts intended for its improvement; and human nature is gradually depraved in its very progress to civilisation. Metamorphosed by the tampering of unskilful or dishonest politicians, and the craft of interested priests, cooperating with politicians, man at present appears, in many countries, a diminutive and distorted animal, compared with what he was in his primeval state. He is become the dwarf and the cripple of courts and cities, instead of the well-formed, beautiful, creature, who once bounded, in the glory of health and strength, over the forest and the mountain, glowing with the warmth of virtue, and breathing the spirit of independence.

Various are the causes which contribute to the factitious depravity of man. Defective and erroneous education corrupts him; the prevalent examples of a degenerate community corrupt him; but bad government corrupts him more than all other causes combined. The grand adversary of human virtue and happiness is Despotism. Look over the

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surface of the whole earth, and behold man, the glory and deputed lord of the creation, withering under the influence of despotism, like the plant of temperate climes scorched by the sun of a torrid zone. The leaf is sickly, the blossom dares not expand its beauty, and no fruit arrives at its just size and maturity.

Turkey, Italy, Egypt! how changed from what ye were when inhabited by ancient Greeks, Romans, Egyptians! Nature, indeed, still smiles upon them with unaltered favour. The blue mantle of the skies is still spread over them in all its luminous magnificence. There is no reason to suppose the earth less fertile. The corn laughs in the vallies. The tree aspires to Heaven with all its original verdure and majesty. But man decays; withered, shrunk, enervated; a form without spirit, an animal less happy than the beasts of the field, and more ignoble, inasmuch as degeneracy is baser than native, original, created inferiority. Fallen with the columnar ruins of better times, over which, in these countries, he often tramples, man himself appears little better than a ruin, displaying all the deformity of the mouldering pile, with scarcely any vestige of its former magnificence. It would equally contradict philosophy and experience to attribute this moral degeneracy to the decay of nature's vigour. There is no reason to conclude that the natural faculties of men who inhabit countries once free, but now enslaved, are produced in a state of less perfection at this hour, than in the days of their illustrious forefathers. Anatomy discovers no defect in the fibres of the heart or the brain; yet the degeneracy remains uncontested. In truth, government has counteracted the beneficence of nature. The men are fallen; while the human figures, with their internal and



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external organization, continue similar, or the same. They are inactive and pusillanimous. They aspire to no extraordinary excellence or achievements; but crouch beneath their despot, glad of the poor privilege allowed them by a fellow-creature, as weak and more wicked than themselves, to eat, drink, sleep, and die. Any preeminent degree of merit among them would render the distinguished possessor of it fatally illustrious, the certain object of a tyrant's vengeance; and they find their best security in their want of virtue. By a voluntary submission to contempt, they retain and transmit the privilege of breathing, and build the bulwark of their safety on their personal insignificance.

Fear must of necessity become the predominant passion in all countries subject to the uncontrolled dominion of an individual and his ministers: but fear chills the blood, and freezes the faculties. Under its icy influence there can arise no generous emulation, no daring spirit of adventure. Enterprise is considered as dangerous, not merely from the general casualty of all human affairs, but because it excites notice, and alarms the jealousy of selfish power. Under a despotic government, to steal through life unobserved, to creep, with timid caution, through the vale of obscurity, is the first wisdom; and to be suffered to die in old age, in the course of nature, without the prison, the chain, the halter, or the axe, the highest pitch of human felicity.

Ignorance of the grossest kind, ignorance of man's nature and rights, ignorance of all that tends to make and keep us happy, disgraces and renders wretched more than half the earth, at this moment, in consequence of its subjugation to despotic power. Ignorance, robed in imperial purple, with pride and cruelty by her side, sways an iron sceptre over more

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than one hemisphere. In the finest and largest regions of this planet which we inhabit, are no liberal pursuits and professions, no contemplative delights, nothing of that pure, intellectual employment which raises man from the mire of sensuality and sordid care, to a degree of excellence and dignity, which we conceive to be angelic and celestial. Without knowledge or the means of obtaining it, without exercise or excitements, the mind falls into a state of infantine imbecility and dotage; or acquires a low cunning, intent only on selfish and mean pursuits, such as is visible in the more ignoble of the irrational creatures, in foxes, apes, and monkies. Among nations so corrupted, the utmost effort of genius is a court intrigue or a ministerial cabal.

A degradation of the understanding, like this, is usually accompanied with depravity of heart. From an inability to find pleasure and honourable employment in the energies of thought, in noble and virtuous action, in refined conversation, in arts, in commerce, in learning, arises a mischievous activity in trifles, a perversion of nature, a wantonness of wickedness, productive of flagitious habits, which render the partaker of reason the most despicable and detestable animal in the whole circle of existence. Thus sunk under the pressure of despotism, who can recognise, notwithstanding the human shape they bear, the lineal descendants of Egyptian, Grecian, Roman worthies, the glory of their times, the luminaries of their own country and the world, the instructors and benefactors of human nature? Thus the image of the Deity, stamped on man at his creation, is defiled or utterly effaced by government, instituted and exercised by man over his fellow-man; and his kindred to Heaven is known no more by the divine resemblance. A bad government is therefore the curse of



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the earth, the scourge of man, the grand obstacle to the divine will, the most copious source of all moral evil, and for that reason, of all misery; but of bad governments, none are comparable, in their mischievous effects, to the despotic.

But if despotism in its extreme produces consequences thus malignant, reason will infer, and experience will justify the inference, that all the subordinate degrees of despotism are proportionally destructive. However it may be disguised by forms, it is ever seeking its own increase and aggrandizement, by openly crushing, or secretly undermining, the fabric of liberty: it is ever encroaching on the privileges and enjoyments of those who are subjected to it; greedily, though foolishly, wishing to engross every good of every kind in this sublunary state, except the good of virtue.

Power, though limited by written laws, in the hands of mortal men, poorly educated, and surrounded by sycophants and flatterers, who wish, by partaking the power, to partake also its profits and distinctions, and thus gratify at once their pride and avarice, is always endeavouring to extend itself beyond the limitations; and requires to be watched with the most jealous eye, by all who are subject to it, and to be restrained within its bounds by the manliest efforts, and the most determined resolution of virtue. Every engine of artifice and terror will be used to suppress such virtue: but the friend of man and of his country will defy persecution, fines, imprisonment, and death, in attempting, by every lawful and rational means, to push back the gigantic strides of encroaching despotism, more destructive of happiness than an earthquake or pestilence. A country deserves no love, when it ceases to be a country of liberty. Human beings constitute a

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country, not a soil in a certain latitude; and an attachment to liberty is the truest loyalty.

It is therefore highly expedient, whenever a people, free by law and constitution, appear in the smallest degree to remit their attention to the preservation of freedom, to urge them, by the most serious admonition, to an immediate resumption of their vigilance. While they slumber and sleep, lulled by the Circèan cup of corruption, the enemy is awake, and busily making his insidious approaches to the citadel. Every inch of ground, they carelessly relinquish, is eagerly seized by the covetous possessor of dominion; the love of which, like the love of money, increases by accession. Nor are there ever wanting numbers of artful men who stimulate a weak or a wicked prince in his encroachments; sensible as they are, that their own power and privileges will be augmented with those of the prince, whose exclusive favour they have gained by sycophantic arts and by cooperation in the fallacious service of enlarging his prerogative. The more the power of the prince is augmented, the greater will be the emoluments, the more brilliant the distinctions of the courtier. A star shines with higher lustre, a riband displays a brighter hue, a title soothes the ear with sweeter music, when conferred by a mighty potentate far exalted above vulgar controul, and who holds his crown in contempt of his people. If kings can be once elevated to the rank of Heaven's vicegerents, how must admiring plebeians idolize their choice favours and their prime favourites? There is always, therefore, a set of men (to whom pomp and vanity are the chief good) who are continually endeavouring to add glory and greatness to the orb from which they derive their own lustre. Moons and satellites would shine faintly indeed, unless the sun of the

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system glittered with intolerable effulgence. If the sun were shorn of its beams, their native opaqueness would pass without notice.

So many advantages do the possessors of power enjoy for its extension, in all countries where courts have influence, that the people, however great their numbers, are scarcely a match for its subtle contrivances, its false alarms, its bribes, its spies, its informers, its constructive treasons, its military force, its superstitious terrors, invented and diffused by a policy, which often laughs in secret at the religion which it enforces with solemn hypocrisy. A court has an opportunity of gratifying, in a thousand different ways, both secretly and openly, the most prevalent and violent passions of human nature. When the mass of the people are artfully seduced to throw their weight into the same scale with the court, liberty in the other must kick the beam. When the aristocracy of rank and riches unite hand in hand, to seduce the people, the delusion may for a time be successful, and advantages may be taken, during the temporary delirium, to rifle the castle of liberty, to weaken its foundations, to break down its battlements, or to lull its watchmen asleep with a powerful opiate.

It has indeed been said in ancient times, and often repeated, that if the "people will be deceived, let them be deceived;" but they have no choice, no chance to escape deception, unless the truth be fairly and publicly exhibited to them, and their minds duly enlightened. When dust is thrown into their eyes, more especially gold dust, the political ophthalmist must honestly endeavour to clear away the obstruction. It becomes every lover of his country, especially a country like England, where even the throne itself is fixed on liberty as on a corner stone, to

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warn his countrymen of the danger, whenever he observes the smallest encroachment on their rights, and the spirit of the times tending but remotely to despotism.

If there be a time, in which the senate of a free country has declared that the influence of the crown "has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished;" and if, instead of a consequent diminution, there be an evident increase of that influence; if acts, like the *habeas corpus*, highly favourable to liberty, be frequently suspended; if unconstitutional benevolences be encouraged; if places and pensions be multiplied; if juries be censured by great men for honest verdicts in favour of freedom; if endeavours be made to restrain the press by sycophantic associations; if spies and informers be kept in pay for the purpose of prosecuting innocent men who espouse the cause of their country; if the press be hired to calumniate both liberty and the people; if wars, neither just nor necessary, be undertaken to divert the public mind from domestic reformation; if a party prevail by artifice, who hate the name of liberty, who are continually employed in aggrandizing monarchy, aristocracy, and in depreciating the people; in such a time, and in such a conjuncture, it becomes every honest man, not yet drawn into the whirlpool of political corruption, to warn his fellow-citizens against an encroaching spirit of despotism.

In the following pages, I offer some suggestions on the subject. I have indeed few qualifications for the task besides sincerity, an earnest desire to promote public and private happiness, and an independence of spirit; but these I certainly have, and profess to maintain. I wish the rising generation may be awakened, and learn to place a due value on the liberty handed down to them by their ancestors. I

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would inspire them with a generosity of mind, which should scorn dissimulation; which should neither practise the arts of corruption, nor become their dupe. I am desirous of discrediting the whole system of corruption, and of rendering all civil government fair, just, open, and honourable. All government, founded on insincerity and injustice, debases the morals and injures the happiness, while it infringes on the civil rights of the people. I wish to revive in the people a due sense of their native and constitutional importance. I endeavour, in this book, to plead the cause of man; firmly convinced that the cause of man is the cause of God.

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## SECTION II.

*Oriental Manners, and the Ideas imbibed in Youth, both in the West and East Indies, favourable to the Spirit of Despotism.*

The foundations of the fair fabric of liberty in Europe were laid in ages when there was but little intercourse, commercial or political, with the remote countries of Asia and America. A hardy race, in ungenial climates, with nerves strung by the northern blast, though little refined by knowledge, felt in an early age, the sentiments of manly virtue, and spurned the baseness of slavery. Luxury had not emasculated their minds; and they threw off, with native elasticity, the burden of unjust dominion. While they submitted, with graceful acquiescence, to all lawful authority, established by their own consent, for the general good; they preserved a noble consciousness of native dignity, and maintained a personal grandeur, a proud independence, a greatness unindebted to the morbid tumour of rank and riches.

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In later times the facility of navigation and the improvements of science have brought into close connection the extremes of the habitable globe. The asperity of manners which sometimes disgraced the virtues of our forefathers, has indeed been softened by various and constant intercourse; the manly spirit has exchanged ferocity for gentleness, and rendered the energetic character consistent with the amiable. It was a happy change; for why should manly virtue assume a forbidding aspect, and lose the recommendation of engaging manners, the happiness of loving and being loved, while it commands, by deserving, cordial reverence?

But from the intercourse of England with the East and West Indies, it is to be feared that something of a more servile spirit has been derived, than was known among those who established the free constitutions of Europe, and than would have been adopted, or patiently borne, in ages of virtuous simplicity.

A very numerous part of our countrymen spend their most susceptible age, in those countries, where despotic manners remarkably prevail. They are themselves, when invested with office, treated by the natives with an idolatrous degree of reverence, which teaches them to expect a similar submission to their will, on their return to their own country. They have been accustomed to look up to personages greatly their superiors in rank and riches, with awe; and to look down on their inferiors in property, with supreme contempt, as slaves of their will and ministers of their luxury. Equal laws and equal liberty at home appear to them saucy claims of the poor and the vulgar, which tend to divest riches of one of the greatest charms, overbearing dominion.

We do indeed import gorgeous silks and luscious sweets from the Indies, but we import, at the same

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time, the spirit of despotism, which adds deformity to the purple robe, and bitterness to the honied beverage.

The vassals of the feudal times, it is true, were abject slaves; but their slavery was freedom, compared to the slavery of the negro. They were not driven by the whip to work in a torrid zone. They were not wanted to administer to personal luxury; for personal luxury did not exist. But the negro is rendered a two-legged beast of burden; and looks up to the infant son of his lord, as to a superior being, whom he is bound to obey, however vicious, whimsical, or cruel the command. Cradled in despotism, the young planter comes to England for education, and brings with him the early impressions which the few years' residence in the land of freedom can seldom obliterate. He returns; grows rich by the labour of slaves, over whom, for the sake of personal safety, the most arbitrary government is exercised, and then perhaps retires to England to spend his age and his acquirements in the capital, the seat of pleasure, the theatre of commercial splendour and courtly magnificence. He mixes much in society, and inevitably communicates his ideas, which have now taken deep root, on the necessity of keeping the vulgar in a state of depression, and strengthening the hands of the rich and the powerful. In the virtuous struggles of the lower and middle ranks for constitutional liberty, is it likely that he should join the contest, on the side of the people? Is it not most probable, that he will throw all his weight, which, considering the weight of money, is often great, in opposition to the popular side? A long succession of such men, personally respectable, but, from peculiar circumstances, favouring the extension of power, and disposed, by habits and principles sucked in with the mother's milk, to repel the

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claims of their inferiors, must contribute greatly to diffuse, in a free country, the spirit of despotism.

That oriental manners are unfavourable to liberty, is, I believe, universally conceded. The natives of the East Indies entertain not the idea of independence. They treat the Europeans, who go among them to acquire their riches, with a respect similar to the abject submission which they pay to their native despots. Young men, who in England scarcely possessed the rank of the gentry, are waited upon in India with more attentive servility than is paid or required in many courts of Europe. Kings of England seldom assume the state enjoyed by an East India governor, or even by subordinate officers.

Enriched at an early age, the adventurer returns to England. His property admits him to the higher circles of fashionable life. He aims at rivalling or exceeding all the old nobility in the splendour of his mansions, the finery of his carriages, the number of his liveried train, the profusion of his table, in every indulgence, which an empty vanity can covet, and a full purse procure. Such a man, when he looks from the window of his superb mansion, and sees the people pass, cannot endure the idea, that they are of as much consequence as himself, in the eye of the law; and that he dares not insult or oppress the unfortunate being who rakes his kennel or sweeps his chimney. He must wish to increase the power of the rich and great, that the saucy vulgar may be kept at a due distance, that they may know their station, and submit their necks to the foot of pride.

The property of such a man will give him great weight in parliamentary elections. He probably purchases a borough. He sides with the court party on all questions; and is a great stickler for the extension of prerogative. In his neighbourhood, and

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as a voter for representatives, he uses all his interest in supporting such men as are likely to promote his views of aggrandizing the great, among whom he hopes to be associated, and in depressing the little, whom he despises and shuns. Having money sufficient, his present object is a title. This he knows can only come from the possessors of power, to whom therefore he pays such a submission as he has seen paid to himself in India by oriental slaves. His whole conduct tends to increase the influence of riches, from which alone, he is conscious, he derives his own importance. What is his eloquence? What his learning? What his beneficence to mankind? Little; perhaps none. But his estate is large, his house large, his park large, his manors many, his equipage, on a birth-day, the most splendid in St. James's-street. Long Acre gives him a passport to court favour. With a seat in the house, and an unrivalled equipage and mansion, he deems himself justly entitled to be made, in due time, a baronet at least, if not an hereditary lawgiver of his country.

By a constantly successive influx of such men from the eastern climes, furnished with the means of corruption, and inclined to promote arbitrary principles of government, it cannot be doubted, that much is contributed to the spirit of despotism. Who among them would not add to the mass of that power and splendour, to possess a large share of which, has been the first object of a life spent in unceasing cares, at the risk of health, and under a vertical sun?

And what is left to oppose the spirit of despotism thus animated in its progress by enormous opulence? Is it the virtue of the honest country gentleman, who lives on his estate, possessing nothing and hoping nothing from the favour of courts? Is it the independence of the middle and the lower ranks, too

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numerous to be bribed either by gifts or expectations? Both, it is to be feared, will be too slow in their opposition to the gigantic monster, if not too feeble. They will not often risk their repose in a dangerous contest with opulence and power. They stand in awe of the sword and the law; which, in bad times, have been equally used as instruments of injustice. Contented with the enjoyment of plenty, or the amusements of rural sports, they sink into a state of indifference to public affairs, and thus leave the field open to those who have no right to occupy it at all, much less exclusively.

Thus the community becomes divided into two descriptions of men; the corruptors and the indifferent; those who seek wealth and honours without virtue, and those who seek only their own ease, regardless of the public.

This indifference is scarcely less culpable than corruption. It must be laid aside. The independent country gentleman, seconded by the people, is the character, on whom liberty must rely, as on her firmest supporter, against the incursion of oriental pride. Let him preserve his independence by frugality. Let him beware of emulating either the oriental or occidental upstart, in expenses which he cannot equal without diminishing his patrimony and losing his independence. Let him cultivate every social virtue, reside on his estate, and become popular by exhibiting superior excellence both of heart and understanding. He will then do right to offer himself a candidate in his vicinity for a seat in the senate; because, as a senator, he will gain a power to act with effect against the increasing weight of corrupt influence. The truly WHIG PARTY, the lovers of liberty and the people, is not only the most favourable to human happiness, but certainly most conge-

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nial to the constitution of England, and ought to be strengthened by the junction of all independent men, lovers of peace, liberty, and human nature.

The TORY AND JACOBITE SPIRIT, under other more plausible names, is still alive, and has increased of late. All who have a just idea of the British constitution, and of the value of liberty, will oppose it, by cultivating manliness of spirit, by illuminating the minds of the people, and by inspiring them with a regard to truth, justice, and independence, together with a love of order and of peace, both internal and external.

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## SECTION III.

*Certain Circumstances in Education which promote the Spirit of Despotism.*

MANY who have arisen to high elevation of rank or fortune seem to think that their nature has undergone a real metamorphosis; that they are refined by a kind of chemical process, sublimed by the sunshine of royal favour, and separated from the fæces, the dross and the dregs of ordinary humanity; that humanity, of which the mass of mankind partake, and which, imperfect as it is, God created. They seem to themselves raised to a pinnacle; from which they behold, with sentiments of indifference or contempt, all two-legged and unfeathered beings of inferior order, placed in the vale, as ministers of their pride, and slaves of their luxury, or else burdens of the earth, and superfluous sharers of existence.

The great endeavour of their lives, never employed in the essential service of society, is to keep the vulgar at a distance, lest their own purer nature should be contaminated by the foul contagion. Their

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offspring must be taught, in the first instance to know and revere, not God, not man, but their own rank in life. The infants are scarcely suffered to breath the common air, to feel the common sun, or to walk on the common earth. Immured in nurseries till the time for instruction arrives, they are then surrounded by a variety of domestic tutors. And what is the first object in their education? Is it the improvement of their minds, the acquisition of manly sentiment, useful knowledge, expanded ideas, piety, philanthropy? No; it is the embellishment of their persons, an accurate attention to dress, to their teeth, to grace in dancing, attitude in standing, uprightness, not the uprightness of the heart, but the formal and unnatural perpendicularity of a soldier drilled on the parade. If a master of learned languages and philosophy be admitted at all, he feels himself in less estimation with the family than the dancing-master; and if possessed of the spirit which the nature of his studies has a tendency to inspire, he will soon depart from a house, where he is considered in the light of an upper servant, paid less wages, and subjected to the caprice of the child whom he ought to controul with the natural authority of superior wisdom. To assume over his pupil the rights of that natural superiority, would be to oppose the favourite ideas of the family, "that all real preeminence is founded on birth, of fortune, and court favour." The first object with the pupil and the last, the lesson to be got by heart and to be repeated by night and by day, is an adequate conception of his own native consequence, a disposition to extend the influence of rank and riches, and to depress and discourage the natural tendency of personal merit to rise to distinction by its own elastic force.

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If the boy be allowed to go to any school at all, which is not always deemed prudent, because schools in general have a few plebeians who raise themselves there, to some degree of superiority, by merit only, it is only to schools, which fashion recommends, which abound with titled persons, and where the expenses are so great, as to keep ingenious poverty, or even mediocrity of fortune, at a respectful distance. Here he is instructed to form connections with his superiors. The principal point is to acquire the haughty air of nobility. Learning and virtue may be added, if peradventure they come easily; but the formation of connections, and the assumption of insolence, is indispensable. To promote this purpose, pocket-money is bestowed on the pupil with a lavish hand by his parents, and all his cousins who court his favour. He must show his consequence, and be outdone by no lord of them all, in the profusion of his expenses, in the variety of his pleasures; and, if his great companions should happen to be vicious, in the enormity of his vice. Insults and injuries may be shown to poor people who attend the school, or live near it, as marks of present spirit and future heroism. A little money makes a full compensation, and the glorious action on one side, and the pusillanimous acquiescence under it, on the other, evinces the great doctrine, that the poor are by nature creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps, and made for the pastime of those who have had the good fortune to be born to opulence or title. The masters themselves are to be kept in due order by the illustrious pupils, or a rebellion may ensue. Such an event indeed is sometimes devoutly wished, as it affords opportunities for embryo heroes to show their prowess and their noble pride. Every ebullition of spirits, as it is candidly called, displaying itself in

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insolence or ill-usage of the inferior ranks, defenceless old men or women, and the poor in general, is remembered and cherished with care, as a flattering prognostic of future eminence in the cabinet, the senate, at the bar, or in the field. Justice, generosity, humility, are words indeed in the dictionary, and may adorn a declamation; but insolence, extravagance, and pride must mark the conduct of those who are sent rather to support the dignity of native grandeur by the spirit of arrogance, than to seek wisdom and virtue with the docility of modest and ingenuous disciples. Practical oppression of inferiors is one of the first elements of aristocratical education; and the order of Fags (as they are called) contributes much to familiarize the exercise of future despotism. Mean submissions prepare the mind, in its turn, to tyrannize.

Let us now suppose the stripling grown too tall for school, and entered at an university. The English universities are admirably well adapted to flatter the pride of wealth and title. There is a dress of distinction for the higher orders extremely pleasing to aristocratical vanity. In the world at large the dress of all gentlemen is so similar, that nothing is left to point out those who think themselves of a superior order; unless indeed they ride in their coaches, and exhibit their splendid liveries behind, and armorial ensigns on the sides: but at Oxford, they never walk the streets, on the commonest occasions, without displaying their proud preeminence by gowns of silk and tufts of gold.

As noblemen, or gentlemen commoners, they not only enjoy the privilege of splendid vestments, but of neglecting, if they please, both learning and religion. They are not required, like vulgar scholars, to attend regularly to the instruction, or to the dis-



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cipline of the colleges; and they are allowed a frequent absence from daily prayer. They are thus taught to believe, that a silken gown and a velvet cap are substitutes for knowledge; and that the rank of gentlemen commoners dispenses with the necessity of that devotion which others are compelled to profess in the college chapels. High privileges these! and they usually fill those who enjoy them with that attachment to rank, which leads directly to the spirit of despotism. They are flattered in the seats of wisdom, where science and liberality are supposed to dwell, with an idea of some inherent virtue in mere rank, independently of merit; and after having learned a lesson so pleasant to self-love and idleness, they go out into the world with confidence, fully resolved to practise the proud theories they have imbibed, and to demand respect without endeavouring to deserve it.

Without public or private virtue, and without even the desire of it; without knowledge, and without even a thirst for it; many of them, on leaving college, enlist under the banners of the minister for the time being, or in a self-interested opposition to him, and boldly stand forth candidates to represent boroughs and counties, on the strength of aristocratical influence. Though they appear to ask favours of the people, they pay no respect to the people, but rely on rank, riches, and powerful connections. Ever inclined to favour and promote the old principles of jacobitism, toryism, and unlimited prerogative, they hope to be rewarded by places, pensions, titles; and then to trample on the wretches by whose venal votes they rose to eminence.

The ideas acquired and cherished at school and at the university are confirmed in the world by association with persons of a similar turn, with Oriental

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adventurers, with pensioners and courtiers, with all who, sunk in the frivolity of a dissipated, vain, and useless life, are glad to find a succedaneum for every real virtue, in the privileges of titular honour, in splendid equipage, in luxurious tables, in magnificent houses, in all that gives distinction without merit, and notoriety without excellence. Their number and their influence increase by an union of similar views and principles; and a formidable phalanx is formed against those liberties, for which the most virtuous part of mankind have lived and died. Under the auspices of multitudes, thus corrupted and united, it is not to be wondered, that the spirit of despotism should increase. Despotism is indeed an Asiatic plant; but brought over by those who have long lived in Asia, and nursed in a hot house with indefatigable care, it is found to vegetate, bloom, and bear fruit, even in our cold, ungenial climate.

It might then be worthy a wise legislator to reform the modes of education, to explode the effeminacy of private and superficial nurture, to promote an equality of rank in schools and universities, and to suffer, in the immature age, no other distinctions than those, which may be adjudged by grave and virtuous instructors, to distinguished improvement, exemplary conduct, goodness of heart, and a regard to the happiness of inferiors.

The constitution of England is founded on liberty, and the people are warmly attached to liberty; then why is it ever in danger, and why is a constant struggle necessary to presevere it uninfringed? Many causes combine, and perhaps none is more operative, than a corrupt education, in which pride is nourished at the tenderest period, and the possession or expectation of wealth and civil honours is tacitly represented, even in the schools of virtue, as superseding the necessity of personal excellence,



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## SECTION IV.

*Corruption of Manners has a natural Tendency to promote the Spirit of Despotism.*

When man ceases to venerate virtue in himself, he soon loses all the sense of moral beauty in the human species. His taste becomes gross; and he learns to consider all that is good and great, as the illusion of simple minds, the unsubstantial phantom of a young imagination. Extreme selfishness is his ruling principle, and he is far from scrupulous in following its dictates. Luxury, vanity, avarice, are his characteristics. Ambition indeed takes its turn; yet, not that noble ambition, which seeks praise and honours by deserving them, but the low spirit of intrigue and cunning, which teaches to secure high appointments, titular distinctions, or whatever else can flatter avarice and pride, by petty stratagem, unmanly compliance, the violation of truth and consistency, and at last the sacrifice of a country's interest and safety.

In nations enriched by commerce, and among families loaded with opulence by the avarice of their forefathers, the mere wantonness of unbounded plenty will occasion a corruption of manners, dangerous to all that renders society happy, but favourable to the despotic principle. Pleasure of the meanest kind will be the first and last pursuit. Splendour, external show, the ostentatation of riches, will be deemed objects of prime consequence. A court will be the place of exhibition; not of great merits, but of fine garments, graceful attitudes, and gaudy equipages, every frivolous distinction, which boldly claims the notice due to virtue, and assumes the

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dignity which public services ought solely to appropriate.

The mind of man, still wanting in the midst of external abundance, an object in futurity; and satiated even to loathing with the continual banquet of plenty, longs to add titular honours, or official importance, to the possession of superfluous property. But these, if they mean any thing, are naturally the rewards of virtuous and useful exertion; and such exertion is incompatible with the habitual indolence, the ignorance, the dissipation, the vice of exorbitant wealth, gained only by mean avarice, and expended in enjoyments that degrade, while they enervate. Men, distinguished by riches only, possess not, amidst all their acquirements the proper price that should purchase civil distinctions, if they were disposed of only to merit. There they are bankrupts. They have no claims on society; for their purposes have been selfish, and their conduct injurious: yet the distinctions must be obtained, or they sicken in the midst of health, and starve, though surrounded with plenty. How then shall they be obtained? They must be bought with money; but how bought? Not directly, not in the market-place, not at public sale. But is there a borough hitherto anti-ministerial, and to convert which from the error of its ways, a very expensive election must be engaged in? The ambitious aspirant to honours is ready with his purse. By money he triumphs over opposition, and adds the weight of his wealth to ministerial preponderance. He assists others in the same noble and generous service of his country. Though covetous, he perseveres regardless of expense, and at last richly merits, from his patron, the glittering bauble which hung on high, and led him patiently through those dark and dirty paths which terminate in the temple

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of prostituted honour. His brilliant success excites others to tread in his steps with eager emulation; and though many fail of the glorious prize, yet all contribute, in the selfish pursuit, to increase and to diffuse the spirit of despotism.

Men destitute of personal merit, and unrecommended by the plea of public services, can never obtain illustrious honours, where the people possess a due share of power, where liberty flourishes, unblighted by corruption; and therefore such men will ever be opposed to the people, and determined enemies to liberty. The atmosphere of liberty is too pure and defecated for their lungs to inhale. Gentles and other vermin can exist only in filth and putrefaction. Such animals, if they possessed reason, would therefore endeavour to contaminate every healthy climate, to destroy the vital salubrity of the liberal air, and diffuse corruption with systematic industry. Are there not political phenomena, which would almost justify a belief in the existence of such animals in the human form; and is not mankind interested, as they value their health, in impeding the progress of infectious pollution?

Corruption does not operate, in the increase of the despotic spirit, on the highest orders only, and the aspirant to political distinction and consequence, but also on the crowded ranks of commercial life. In a great and rich nation, an immense quantity and variety of articles is ever wanted to supply the army and navy. No customers are so valuable as the public. The pay is sure and liberal, the demand enormous, and a very scrupulous vigilance against fraud and extortion seldom maintained with rigid uniformity. Happy the mercantile men who can procure a contract! The hope of it will cause an obsequious acquiescence in the measures of the ruling

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minister. But it happens that such acquiescence, in such men, is peculiarly dangerous, in a commercial country, to the cause of freedom. The mercantile orders constitute corporate bodies, rich, powerful, influential; they therefore have great weight in elections. Juries are chiefly chosen from mercantile life. In state trials, ministers are anxious to obtain verdicts favourable to their retention of emolument and place. If the hope of contracts and other douceurs should ever overcome the sanctity of oaths, in an age when religion has lost much of its influence, then will the firmest pillar of freedom be undermined, and courts of justice become mere registers of ministerial edicts. Thus both senatorial and judicial proceedings will be vitiated by the same means; and LIBERTY left to deplore a declining cause, while CORRUPTION laughs from a Lord Mayor's coach, as he rides in triumph to court, to present, on her knees, the address of sycophancy.

When the public mind is so debauched as to consider titles and money as the chief good of man, weighed with which, honesty and conscience are but as dust in the balance, can it be supposed that a due reverence will be paid to the obsolete parchments of a *magna charta*, to bills of rights, or to revolutions which banished the principles of the Stuarts, together with their families, which broke their despotism in pieces together with their sceptres, and trampled their pride under foot with their crowns and robes of purple? The prevalence of corruption may hereafter call back to life the race of jacobites and tories, and place, in future times, on the throne of liberty, an imaginary Stuart. It was not the person, but the principles, which rendered the old family detestable to a people who deserved liberty, because they dared to claim it. The revival of those principles (if ever

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unhappily it should take place) might render a successor, though crowned by liberty herself, equally detestable.

To avoid such principles, the corruption that infallibly leads to them must be repelled. The people should be tinctured with philosophy and religion; and learn, under their divine instruction, not to consider titular distinction and enormous riches as the chief good, and indispensably requisite to the happiness of life. A noble spirit of personal virtue should be encouraged in the rising race. They should be taught to seek and find resources in themselves, in an honest independence, in the possession of knowledge, in conscious integrity, in manliness of sentiment, in contemplation and study, in every thing which adds vigour to the nerves of the mind, and teaches it to deem all honours disgraceful, and all profits vile, which accrue, as the reward of base compliance, and of a dastardly desertion from the upright standard of truth, the unspotted banner of justice.

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## SECTION V.

*An Abhorrence of Despotism and an ardent Love of Liberty perfectly consistent with Order and Tranquillity; and the natural Consequence of well-informed Understandings and benevolent Dispositions.*

Those who are possessed of exorbitant power, who pant for its extension, and tremble at the apprehension of losing it, are always sufficiently artful to dwell with emphasis, on the evils of licentiousness; under which opprobrious name, they wish to stigmatize liberty. They describe the horrors of anarchy and confusion, in the blackest colours; and boldly affirm that they are the necessary consequences of intrusting the people with power. Indeed, they hardly

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condescend to recognise the idea of a PEOPLE; but whenever they speak of the mass of the community, denominate them the mob, the rabble, or the swinish multitude. Language is at a loss for appellatives, significant of their contempt for those, who are undistinguished by wealth or titles, and is obliged to content itself with such words as reptiles, scum, dregs, or the many-headed monster.

Man, that noble animal, formed with powers capable of the sublimest virtues, possessed of reason, and tremulously alive to every finer feeling, is degraded by his fellow man, when drest in a little brief authority, to a rank below that of the beasts of the field; for the beasts of the field are not treated with epithets of contumely, but regarded with a degree of esteem. The proud man views the horses in his stable and the dogs in his kennel with affection, pampers them with food, lodges them in commodious habitations, and, at the same time, despises his fellow-creatures, scarcely fed, wretchedly clothed, and barely sheltered in the neighbouring cottage. And if this fellow-creature dares to remonstrate, his complaint is contumacy and sedition, and his endeavour to meliorate his own state and that of his peers, by the most lawful means, downright treason and rebellion.

Villainous oppression on one hand, and on the other, contemptible submission! If such acquiescence, under the most iniquitous inequality; such wretchedness, without the privilege of complaint, is the peace, the order, and the tranquillity of despotism; then peace, order, and tranquillity change their nature, and become the curse and bane of human nature. Welcome, in comparison, all the feuds, animosities, and revolutions attributed to a state of freedom; for

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they are symptoms of life and robust health, while the repose of despotism is the deadness of a palsy. Life, active, enterprising life, with all its tumult, disaster, and disappointment, is to be preferred to the silence of death, the stillness of desolation.

But I deny that a love of liberty, or a state of liberty, is of necessity productive of injurious or fatal disorder. I presuppose that the minds of the people, even the lowest of the people, are duly enlightened; that the savageness of gross ignorance is mitigated by culture; by that culture, which all well-regulated states are solicitous to bestow on every partaker of the rational faculty.

In a state of liberty, every man learns to value himself as man; to consider himself as of importance in the system which himself has approved and contributed to establish; and therefore resolves to regulate his own behaviour consistently with its safety and preservation. He feels as a proprietor, not as a tenant. He loves the state because he participates in it. His obedience is not the cold reluctant result of terror; but the lively, cheerful, and spontaneous effect of love. The violation of laws, formed on the pure principle of general beneficence, and to which he has given his full assent, by a just and perfect representation, he considers as a crime of the deepest die. He will think freely, and speak freely, of the constitution. He will incessantly endeavour to improve it; and enter seriously into all political debate. In the collision of agitated minds, sparks will sometimes be emitted; but they will only give a favourable light and a genial warmth. They will never produce an injurious conflagration.

What employment, in the busy scene in which man engages from the cradle to the tomb, is more

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worthy of him than political discussion? It affords a field for intellectual energy, and all the finest feelings of benevolence. It exercises and strengthens every faculty. It calls forth latent virtues, which else had slept in the bosom, like the diamond in the mine. And is this employment, thus useful and honourable, to be confined to a few among the race of mortals? Is there to be a monopoly of political action and speculation? Why then did heaven bestow reason and speech, powers of activity, and a spirit of enterprise, in as great perfection on the lowest among the people, as on those who, by no merit of their own, inherit wealth and high station? Heaven has declared its will by its acts. Man contravenes it; but time, and the progressive improvement of the understanding, will reduce the anomaly to its natural rectitude. And if a few irregularities should sometimes arise in the process, they are of no importance when weighed with the happy result; the return of distorted systems to truth, to reason, and the will of God. Occasional ferments, with all their inconveniencies, are infinitely preferable to the putrescence of stagnation. They are symptoms of health and vigour; and though they may be attended with transient pain, yet while they continue to appear at intervals, there is no danger of mortification. Good hearts, accompanied with good understandings, seldom produce, even where mistaken, lasting evil. They repair and compensate.

But I repeat that the people should be enlightened, in every rank, the highest as well as the lowest, to render them capable of perfect liberty, without danger of those evils which its enemies are always asserting to be its unavoidable consequences. The vulgar must be instructed not merely in the arts which tend

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to the acquisition, increase, and preservation of money, but in a generous philosophy. They must be liberalized. They must early learn to view human life and society in their just light; to consider themselves as essential parts of a whole, the integrity of which is desirable to every component member. Their taste will improve with their understanding; and they will see the beauty of order, while they are convinced of its utility. Thus principled by virtue, and illuminated with knowledge, they will eagerly return, after every deviation, which even a warmth of virtue may cause, to regular obedience, and to all the functions of citizens; valuing the public peace and prosperity, because they understand clearly that the public happiness is intimately combined with their own. They may infringe laws, from the imperfection of their nature; but they will return to their obedience without force; having been convinced that no laws are made, but such as are necessary to their well-being in society. They will consider laws, not as chains and fetters, but as helmets and shields for their protection. The light of the understanding will correct the eccentricities of the heart; and all deviations, however rapid at their commencement, will be short in extent and transitory in duration.

Such would be the effect of enlightening the people with political knowledge, and enlarging their minds by pure philosophy. But what say the despots? Like the tyrannical son of Philip, when he reprimanded Aristotle for publishing his Discoveries, they whisper to their myrmidons, "Let us diffuse darkness round the land.* Let the people be kept in a brutal state. Let their conduct, when assembled, be

* Σκοτισον, σκοτισον, *darken your doctrines,* said the despot, Alexander, to the great philosopher.

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riotous and irrational as ignorance and our spies can make it, that they may be brought into discredit, and deemed unfit for the management of their own affairs. Let power be rendered dangerous in their hands, that it may continue unmolested in our own. Let them not taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge, lest they become as we are, and learn to know good and evil."

That such are the sentiments of the men who wish for the extension of royalism and the depression of the people, is evident from the uneasiness they have shown at all benevolent attempts to diffuse knowledge among the poor. They have expressed, in terms of anger and mortification, their dislike of Sunday schools. The very newspapers which they have engaged in the service of falsehood and toryism, have endeavoured to discountenance, by malignant paragraphs, the progress of those patriotic institutions. Scribblers of books and pamphlets, in the same vile cause, have intimated their apprehensions that the poor may learn to read political books in learning to read their Bible; and that the reading of political books must unavoidably produce discontent. A wretched compliment to the cause which they mean to defend! It is impossible not to infer from their apprehensions, that as men increase in understanding and knowledge, they must see reason to disapprove the systems established. These men breathe the very spirit of despotism, and wish to communicate it. But their conduct, in this instance, is an argument against the spirit which they endeavour to diffuse. Their conduct seems to say, The spirit of despotism is so unreasonable, that it can never be approved by the mass of the people, when their reason is suffered to receive its proper cultivation.

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Their conduct seems to say, Let there be light, and the deformity of despotism will create abhorrence.

Be the consequence what it may, let the light of knowledge be diffused among all who partake of reason; and let us remember that it was THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY who first said: LET THERE BE LIGHT.

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## SECTION VI.

*On the Venality of the Press under the Influence of the despotic Spirit, and its Effects in diffusing that Spirit.*

THE most successful, as well as the most insidious mode of abolishing an institution which favours liberty, and, for that reason, alarms the jealousy of encroaching power, is to leave the form untouched, and gradually to annihilate the essence. The voracious worm eats out the kernel completely, while the husk continues fair to the eye, and apparently entire. The gardener would crush the insect, if it commenced the attack on the external tegument; but it carries on the work of destruction with efficacy and safety, while it corrodes the unseen fruit, and spares the outside shell.

The liberty of the press in England is not openly infringed. It is our happiness and our glory. No man or set of men, whatever be their power or their wishes, dares to violate this sacred privilege. But in the heathen mythology we learn, that when Jupiter himself could not force certain obstacles by his thunder-bolt, he found an easy admission in the shape of a golden shower.

In times when the jacobitical, tory, selfish, and despotic principles rear their heads, and think opportunities favour their efforts for revival, the press is

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bought up as a powerful engine of oppression. The people must be deceived, or the despots have no chance to prevail in the dissemination of doctrines, unnatural, nonsensical, and injurious to the rights of human nature. The only channel, through which the knowledge of what it most imports them to know, next to morality and religion, devolves upon the mass of the community, is a newspaper. This channel must therefore be secured. The people's money must be employed to pollute the waters of truth, to divert their course, and, if occasion require, to stop them with dams, locks, and floodgates. The press, that grand battery, erected by the people to defend the citadel of liberty, must be turned against it. Pamphlets are transient, and confined in their operation. Nothing will satisfy the zeal of the assailant, but the diurnal papers of intelligence. They keep up a daily attack, and reach every part of the assaulted edifice.

Newspapers, thus bought with the people's money, for the purpose of deceiving the people, are, in the next place, circulated with all the industry of zealous partisans, and all the success, that must attend the full exertion of ministerial influence. Public houses in great towns, are frequently the property of overgrown traders, who supply them with the commodities they vend; and who dictate the choice of the papers, which they shall purchase for the perusal of their customers. Whoever frequents such houses, ruled as they are by petty despots, must swallow the false politics, together with the adulterated beverage, of the lordly manufacturer. A distress for rent, or an arrest for debt, might follow the rash choice of a paper favourable to truth, justice, and humanity. If any conversation should arise among the customers, friendly to liberty, in consequence of perusing an

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interdicted print of this kind, the licence of the house might be in danger, and an honest tradesman with his family turned out of doors to starve. Spies are sent to his house to mix with the guests, that in the moment of convivial exhilaration, when prudence sleeps, some incautious comment on the newspaper may be seized and carried to the agent of despotism, who, like the tiger, thirsting for human blood, lies watching for his prey in the covert of obscurity. The host, therefore, for the sake of safety, gladly rejects all papers of intelligence, which are free to speak the truth, and becomes a useful instrument, in the hands of selfish placemen, in the dissemination of doctrines subversive of liberty, and therefore of the constitution which is founded upon it as a corner stone.

So far as such venal papers are diffused, under influence thus arbitrary, the liberty of the press is, in effect destroyed. It is made to serve the purposes of slavery, by propagating principles unfavourable to the people's rights, by palliating public abuses, varnishing ministerial misconduct, and concealing facts in which the people are most deeply interested. Perhaps there is nothing which contributes so much to diffuse the spirit of despotism as venal newspapers, hired by the possessors of power, for the purpose of defending and prolonging their possession. The more ignorant classes have a wonderful propensity to be credulous in all that they see in print, and will obstinately continue to believe a newspaper, to which they have been accustomed, even when notorious facts give it the lie. They know little of history, nothing of philosophy, and adopt their political ideas from the daily lectures of a paper established solely to gain their favour to one party, the party possessed of present power; zealous for its extension and prolongation, and naturally desirous

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of preventing all scrupulous inquiry into its abuse. Such means, so used, certainly serve the cause of persons in office, and gratify avarice and pride; but it is a service which, while it promotes the sordid views of a few individuals, militates against the spirit of constitutional freedom. It is a vile cause, which cannot be maintained to the security and satisfaction of those who wish to maintain it, without recourse to daily falsehood, and the cowardly concealment of conscious malversation. Honest purposes love the light of truth, and court scrutiny; because the more they are known, the more they must be honoured. The friends of liberty and man are justly alarmed, whenever they see the press preoccupied by power, and every artifice used to poison the sources of public intelligence.

In every free country, the people, who pay all expenses, claim a right to know the true state of public affairs. The only means of acquiring that knowledge, within reach of the multitude, is the press; and it ought to supply them with all important information, which may be divulged without betraying intended measures, the accomplishment of which would be frustrated by communication to a public enemy. The very papers themselves, which communicate intelligence, pay a tax above the intrinsic value of the work and materials, to the support of the government: and the stamp, which vouches for the payment, ought at the same time, if any regard were paid to justice and honour, to be an authentic testimony that government uses no arts of deception in the intelligence afforded.

But let any one review, if it be not too nauseous an employment, the prints which of late years have been notoriously in the pay of ministerial agency. There he will see the grossest attempts to impose on



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the public credulity. He will see the existence of known facts, when they militate against the credit of a ministry, doubted or denied; dubious victories extolled beyond all resemblance to truth; and defeats, in the highest degree disgraceful and injurious, artfully extenuated. All who have had opportunities of receiving true intelligence, after some great and unfortunate action, have been astonished at the effrontery which has diminished the number of lives lost to a sum so small, as contradicts the evident conclusions of common sense, and betrays the features of falsehood at the first appearance. All who have been able to judge of the privileges of Englishmen, and the rights of human nature, have seen with abhorrence, doctrines boldly broached and sophistically defended, which strike at once at the English constitution, and the happiness of man in society. They have seen this done by those who pretended an almost exclusive regard to law, order, and religion; themselves grossly violating all of them, while they are reviling others for the supposed violation, in the bitterest language which rancour, stimulated by pride and avarice, can utter.

When powerful ministers, possessed of a thousand means of patronising and rewarding obsequious instruments of their ambition, are willing to corrupt, there will never be wanting needy, unprincipled, and aspiring persons to receive the infection. But can men be really great, really honourable—can they be patriots and philanthropists—can they be zealous and sincere friends to law, order, and religion, who thus hesitate not to break down all the fences of honour, truth, and integrity; and render their administration of affairs more similar to the juggling tricks of confederate sharpers, than to the grave, ingenuous conduct of statesmen, renowned for their

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wisdom and revered for their virtue? Do men thus exalted, whose conduct is a model, and whose opinion is oracular, mean to teach a great nation that conscience is but a name, and honour a phantom? No books of those innovators, whom they persecute, contribute to discredit the system, which these men support, so much as their own sinister measures of self-defence.

There is little hope of preventing the corruption of the diurnal papers by any remonstrance addressed to men, who, entrenched behind wealth and power, scorn to yield at the summons of reason. There may be more hope in appealing to the readers and encouragers of such papers. Do they wish to be deceived? Is it pleasant to be misled by partial, mutilated, and distorted narratives? Is it manly to become voluntary dupes? Or is it honourable, is it honest, to cooperate with any men, for any purposes, in duping others? No, let the press, however it may be perverted by private persons, to the injury of society, be preserved by the public, by men high in office, the guardians of every valuable institution, as an instrument of good to the community, as the support of truth, as the lamp of knowledge.

Though the liberty of the press should be preserved, yet let it be remembered, that the corruption of the press, by high and overbearing influence, will be almost as pernicious to a free country as its destruction. An imprimatur on the press would spread an alarm which would immediately remove the restraint; but the corruption of the press may insinuate itself unperceived, till the spirit of despotism, promoted by it, shall at last connive at, or even consent to, its total abolition.



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## SECTION VII.

*The fashionable Invectives against Philosophy and Reason, a Proof of the Spirit of Despotism.*

Persons who owe all their preeminence to the merit of their forefathers, or to casual events, which constitute good fortune, are usually desirous of fixing a standard of dignity, very different from real worth, and spare no pains to depreciate personal excellence, all such excellence as is, in fact, the most honourable; because it cannot exist without talents or virtues. Birth and riches, fashion and rank, are in their estimation infinitely more honourable and valuable than all the penetrating sagacity and wonderful science of a Newton. Such persons value Newton more as a knight than as a philosopher; more for the title bestowed upon him by Queen Anne, than the endowment given him by God, and improved by his own meritorious exertion.

Upon this principle, many men in our times, who wish to extend and aggrandize that power, from whose arbitrary bounty they derive all the honour they are capable of acquiring, endeavour to throw contempt on philosophy. It may indeed be doubted, whether they all know the meaning of the word; but they know it implies a merit not derived from princes, and therefore they wish to degrade it. Their fountain of honour, they conceive, has no resemblance, in its nature of efficacy, to the famed fountains of Parnassus: it conveys no inspiration, except that which displays itself in the tumour of pride.

The present age has heard upstart noblemen give to philosophers (whose genius and discoveries entitle them to rank, in Reason's table of precedency,

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above every nobleman in the red book) the opprobrious appellation of wretches and miscreants. Philosophy and philosophers have been mentioned by men, whose attainments would only qualify them for distinction in a ball room, with expressions of hatred and contempt due only to thieves, murderers, the very outcast and refuse of human nature.

The mind is naturally led to investigate the cause of such virulence, and to ask how has philosophy merited this usage from the tongue of factitious grandeur. The resentment expressed against philosophy is expressed with a peevishness and acrimony that proves it to proceed from the sense of a sore place. How has pride been so severely hurt by philosophy? It has been exposed, laid open to the eye of mankind in all its nakedness. Philosophy has held the scales, and rejected the coin that wanted weight. Philosophy has applied the touchstone, and thrown away the counterfeit. Hence the spirit of despotism is incensed against philosophy; and if proclamations or cannon balls could destroy her, her perdition would be inevitable and eternal. Folly exclaims aloud, "Let there be no light to detect my paint and tinsel." But happily, the command of Folly, however imperial her tone, is not the fiat of Omnipotence. Philosophy therefore will survive the anathema; and standing on the rock of truth, laugh at the artillery of confederated despots.

When she deserts truth, she no longer deserves to be called philosophy: and it must be owned, that when she has attacked religion, she has justly lost her reputation. But here it is well worthy of remark, that those who now most bitterly revile her, gave themselves little concern about her, till she descended to politics. She might have continued to argue against religion; and many of her present opposers

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would have joined in her cry with alacrity: but the moment she entered on the holy ground of politics, the ignorant grandees shuddered at the profanation, and "Avaunt Philosophy," was the word of alarm.

Philosophy, so far from deserving contempt, is the glory of human nature. Man approaches by contemplation to what we conceive of celestial purity and excellence. Without the aid of philosophy, the mass of mankind, all over the terraqueous globe, would have sunk in slavery and superstition, the natural consequences of gross ignorance. Men at the very bottom of society, have been enabled by the natural talents they possessed, seconded by favourable opportunities, to reach the highest improvements in philosophy; and have thus lifted up a torch in the valley, which has exposed the weakness and deformity of the castle on the mountain, from which the oppressors sallied, in the night of darkness, and spread desolation with impunity. Despots, the meanest, the basest, the most brutal and ignorant of the human race, would have trampled on the rights and the happiness of men unresisted, if philosophy had not opened the eyes of the sufferers, shown them their own power and dignity, and taught them to despise those giants of power, as they appeared through the mist of ignorance, who ruled a vassal world with a mace of iron. Liberty is the daughter of Philosophy; and they who detest the offspring, do all that they can to vilify and discountenance the mother.

But let us calmly consider what is the object of this philosophy, so formidable in the eyes of those who are bigotted to ancient abuses, who hate every improvement, and who wish to subject the many to the controul of an arbitrary few. Philosophy is ever employed in finding out whatever is good, and

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whatever is true. She darts her eagle eye over all the busy world, detects error and mischief, and points out modes of improvement. In the multiform state of human affairs, ever obnoxious to decay and abuse, it is hers to meditate on the means of melioration. She wishes to demolish nothing but what is a nuisance. To build, to repair, to strengthen, and to polish, these are the works which she delights to plan; and, in concerting the best methods of directing their accomplishment, she consumes the midnight oil. How can she disturb human affairs, since she dwells in contemplation, and descends not to action? Neither does she impel others to action by the arts of delusive eloquence. She applies to reason alone; and if reason is not convinced, all that she has done, is swept away, like the web of Arachne.

But it is modern philosophy, and French philosophy, which gives such umbrage to the lovers of old errors, and the favourers of absolute power; just as if philosophy were mutable by time or place. Philosophy, by which I mean the investigation of the good and true, on all subjects, is the same, like the sun, whether it shines in China or Peru. Truth and good are eternal and immutable; and therefore philosophy, which is solely attached to these, is still one and the same, whether ancient or modern, in England or in France.

It is sophistry, and not philosophy, which is justly reprobated; and there has at all times been more sophistry displayed by the sycophant defenders of despotism, than by the friends to liberty. England has ever abounded with sophists, when the high prerogative notions, Toryism, and Jacobitism, and the servile principles which flow from them, have required the support of eloquence, either written or

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oral. Besides our modern *Filmers*, we have had an army of ten thousand mercenary speakers and writers, whose names are as little remembered as their venal productions. Such men, contending against the light of nature, and common sense, have been obliged to seek succour of sophistry. Theirs is the philosophy, falsely so called, which deserves reprobation. They have had recourse to verbosity, to puzzle and perplex the plainest points; they have seduced the reader from the direct road of common sense, to delude his imagination in the fairy land of metaphor; they fine-spun their arguments to a degree of tenuity neither tangible nor visible, that they might excite the awe which is always felt for the incomprehensible by the ignorant; and at the same time, elude the refutation of the learned and the wise: they have acquired a lubricity, which, like the eel, enables them to slip from the grasp of the captor, whom they could not have escaped, by the fair exertion of muscular vigour. Animated with the hope of reward from that power which they labour to extend, they have, like good servants to their masters, bestowed art and labour in proportion to the weakness of their cause: they have assumed an air of wisdom to impose on the multitude, and uttered the language of knavery and folly with the grave confidence of an oracle. It is not necessary to cross the Channel in order to find Sophistry, decking herself, like the ass in the skin of the lion, with the venerable name of Philosophy.

As we value a free press, or wish to preserve a due esteem for genius and science, let us ever be on our guard, when we hear great men, possessing neither genius nor science, rail against philosophy. Let us remember, that it was a Roman tyrant, in the decline of all human excellence, (when Providence

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permitted such monsters to show the world the full deformity of despotism,) who wished to extinguish the light of learning by abolishing the finest productions of genius. There are men, in recent times, who display all the propensities of a Caligula; be it the people's care, that they never possess his power.

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## SECTION VIII.

*Of Loyalty, and certain mistaken Ideas of it.*

The mass of the community, on whom the arts of delusion are chiefly practised by politicians, are seldom accurate in the use of words; and among others which they misunderstand, and are led, by the satellites of despotism, to misapply, is the term, Loyalty.

Loyalty means, in its true sense, a firm and faithful adherence to the law and constitution of the community of which we are members. If monarchy be a part of that constitution, it certainly means a firm and faithful attachment to the person of the monarch, as well as to the monarchical form, and all the other branches of the system. It is nearly synonymous with fidelity; but as fidelity may be actuated solely by principles of duty, loyalty seems, in its common acceptation, to include in it also a sentiment of affection. It is the obedience of love, and anticipates compulsion. It is a sentiment, which all good men will feel, when they live under a good government honestly administered.

But mark the disingenuity of men impelled by high-church, high-tory, or jacobitical principles. They would limit this liberal comprehensive principle, which takes in the whole of the constitution, and therefore tends to the conservation of it all, in its

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full integrity; they would limit it to the person of the monarch, to that part of the whole, which favours, in their opinion, their own purposes, and the extension of power and prerogative, the largesses of which they hope to share in reward for their sycophantic zeal, their slavish, selfish, perfidious adulation.

They represent this confined loyalty as a religious duty, partaking the nature of divine worship. They set up an idol, and command all men, upon their duty, to adore it. The people are not entitled even to attention by the propagators of this inhuman, antichristian idolatry.

Let us consider a moment the mischief this artifice has in former times occasioned to our country. It attached great numbers to the family of the Stuarts, after they had forfeited all right to the crown; to the persons of the Stuarts, and for a long period harassed the lawful king and the people of this nation with wars, alarms, seditions, and treasons. Tory zealots shed their blood freely, on the impulse of this unreasonable loyalty, which disregarded the ruling powers of their country established by law; and, in promoting the interest of a dispossessed individual, considered a whole people, either as a nonentity, or as worthy to be sacrificed for one man. Such men, acting in consistency with their principles of false loyalty, would have drenched their country in blood to restore an exiled Nero, of the legitimate family.

Narrow loyalty, like this, which is but another name for bigotry, must ever be inimical to a monarch limited by laws, wishing to govern by them, and owing his seat on his throne to a revolution, to the expulsion of a preoccupant, and the refusal of a pretender's claim. It must ever keep alive a doubt

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of his title. If it assumes the appearance of affection for him, it may be suspected as the kiss of Judas. If it should seduce him to extend his power beyond the constitutional limits, it would lead him to destruction; and involve a people in all the misery of revolutionary disorder. Is then such loyalty a public virtue? In cunning men it is but mean servility endeavouring to ingratiate itself with the prince, for honours and emoluments. In the simple ones, it is silly superstition. In both, it is injurious to the king of a free country and to the constitution. It confines that attention to one branch, which ought duly to be distributed among all, and to comprehend, in its attachment, that main root and stock, from which all the branches grow, the people at large.

Nevertheless, such is the subtle policy of those who are actuated by the principles of tories, jacobites, royalists, despots, (call them by which name you please,) that they continue to represent every spirited effort in favour of the people's rights, as originating in disloyalty. The best friends to the constitution in its purity, and therefore the best friends to the limited monarch, are held out, both to public and to royal detestation, as disaffected to the person of the prince. Every stratagem is used to delude the common and unthinking part of the people into a belief, that their only way of displaying loyalty is, to display a most servile obsequiousness to the throne, and to oppose every popular measure. The procurers of addresses couch them in the most unmanly language of submission, and approach with a degree of prostration of sentiment, worthier to be received by the great Mogul or the Chinese emperor, than the chief magistrate of a free people. The composers and presenters of such testimonies of loyalty, hoping, if not for the splendid, at least for some sub-

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stantial effect of royal gratitude, exhaust the language of all its synonymous terms, to express their abject servility. Yet after all, of such a nature is their loyalty, that, if a Stuart or a Robespierre were the possessor of power, their mean and hollow professions of attachment would be equally ardent and importunate. The powers that be are the powers which they worship. The proffer of their lives and fortunes is the common sacrifice. But to distinguish their loyalty, they would go farther than the addressers of the foolish and unfortunate James, and present their very souls to be disposed of by their earthly Deity; knowing it to be a safe oblation.

As great respect is due to the office of the supreme magistrate, so also is great affection due to his person, while he conducts himself with propriety, and consults the happiness of the people. The most decorous language should be used to him, the most respectful behaviour preserved towards him; every mode adopted of showing him proofs of love and honour, on this side idolatry. Arduous is his task, though honourable. It should be sweetened by every mode which true and sincere loyalty can devise. I would rather exceed than fall short of the deference due to the office and the man. But I will not pay a limited monarch, at the head of a free people, so ill a compliment, as to treat him as if he were a despot, ruling over a land of slaves. I cannot adopt the spirit of despotism in a land of liberty; and I must reprobate that false, selfish, adulatory loyalty, which, seeking nothing but its own base ends of avarice or ambition, and feeling no real attachment either to the person or the office of the king, contributes nevertheless to diffuse by its example, a servile, abject temper, highly promotive of the despotic spirit.

But the ministers of state have sometimes pre-

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sumed so far on present possession of power, as to attempt to make the people believe, that a loyalty is due to them; that an opposition to their will is a proof of defective loyalty; a remonstrance against their measures, a mark of disaffection. They have not been unsuccessful. The servile herds who come forward into public life, solely to be bought up, when marketable, are, for the most part, more inclined to worship the minister than the monarch. While it is the priest who divides among the sacrificers the flesh of the victim, many attend with devotion at the sacrifice; who are more desirous of propitiating the priest than the Deity. There are many who, if they had it in their power, would make it constructive treason to censure any minister, whose continuance in place is necessary to realize their prospects of riches and titular distinction. Such men wander up and down society as spies, and mark those who blame the minister, as persons to be suspected of disloyalty. They usually fix on them some nickname, in order to depreciate their characters in the eyes of the people, and prevent them from ever rising to such a degree of public esteem, as might render them competitors for ministerial douceurs. Associations are formed by such men, under pretence of patriotism and loyalty, but with no other real design, than that of keeping the minister in place, whom they hope to find a bountiful paymaster of their services, at the public expense.

True loyalty has no connection with all this meanness and selfishness. True loyalty is manly, while obedient, and respects itself, while it pays a voluntary and cheerful deference to authority and the persons invested with it. It throws sordid considerations aside, and having nothing in view but the general good, bears an affection, and shows that

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affection, to the whole of a system established for the preservation of order and liberty. It is not misguided by pompous names, nor blinded by the glitter of external parade; but values offices and officers in the state, for the good they actually promote, for the important functions they perform, for the efficient place they fill, in the finely constituted machine of a well-regulated community.

Such loyalty, I believe, does abound in England, notwithstanding the calumnies of interested men, who would misrepresent and cry down all real patriotism, that their own counterfeit may obtain currency. Men who possess such loyalty will be found the best friends to kings; if ever those times should return, which are said to afford the truest test of friendship, the times of adversity.

May those times never come! but yet let us cherish the true loyalty and explode the false; because the true is the best security to limited monarchy and constitutional liberty: while the false, by diffusing a spirit of despotism, equally inimical to the constitution and to human happiness, is destroying the legal limitations, undermining the established systems, and introducing manners and principles at once degrading to human nature, and pregnant with misery to nations.

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## SECTION IX.

*On taking Advantage of popular Commotions, accidental Excesses, and foreign Revolutions, to extend Prerogative and Power, and encroach on the Liberties of the People.*

The riots in London, which, to the disgrace of magistracy, and the boasted vigilance of ministers,

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(richly paid as they are, to guard the public safety,) arrived from contemptible beginnings to a formidable magnitude in the year 1780, have been considered by courtiers, and those who are continually labouring to exalt prerogative at the expense of liberty, as extremely favourable to their purpose. They caused an universal panic. The cowardice, folly, and perhaps wickedness of certain public functionaries, were the true cause of the extensive mischief; but the excesses of a few most wretched rioters, who scarcely knew what they were doing; children, women, and drunken persons, were attributed to the PEOPLE. Arguments were drawn from the event against popular characters, popular books, popular assemblies, and in favour of military coercion. Military associations in the capital were encouraged, and the bank of England became a barrack. Liberty has few votaries in comparison with property. The alarm was artfully increased, and the spirit of despotism grew under its operation. The Tory and Jacobite party exulted over the ruins, and would have rejoiced in building a Bastille with the dilapidations. "See," said they, as they triumphed over the scene, "the effects of power in the hands of the people!"

But the truth is, the people, the grand mass of the community, were not at all concerned in effecting the mischief; for I cannot call a fortuitous assemblage of boys, beggars, women, and drunkards, the people. The first irregularities might have been suppressed by the slightest exertions of manly spirit. But those who were possessed of efficient places and their emoluments, enjoying the sweets of office without suffering a sense of its duties to imbitter them, displayed no spirit, and left it to be fairly inferred that they had it not. The people at large were not

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to be blamed for these unfortunate events; the whole of the culpability belonged to the appointed ministers of the law, in whom the people trusted and were deceived. The blame, however, was laid on the people; and those who, from their arbitrary principles, wished to discredit all popular interference in government, rejoiced at the calamity, as an auspicious event, confirming all their theories and justifying their practice.

The artful encroachers on liberty were not deceived in calculating the effects resulting from this total dereliction of duty on the part of the civil magistrate. Almost immediately a damp was cast on the generous ardour, which, under a Wyvill, a Richmond, a Portland, and a Pitt, was seeking the salvation of the country, in a well-timed and deliberate reform of the House of Commons. A few, indeed, remained equally zealous in the virtuous cause; but the minds of the many were palsied by the panic, and seemed ready to acquiesce under every corruption attended with tranquillity, rather than risk a reform, which, they were taught to believe, could not be effected without popular commotion. Toryism saw the change with delight, and employed all its influence in augmenting and continuing the political torpor.

In a few years the public mind seemed to have relinquished its intentions of effecting a speedy reform. It seemed to adopt the physician's maxim, *Malum bene* positum ne moveto;* and hesitated to undertake the removal of a local pain, lest it should throw the morbid matter over the whole habit. The fear of exciting a general inflammation prevented men from probing and cleaning the inveterate ulcer. In the mean time, the sore is growing worse, and if not

* Though this evil is *malum* malè *positum.*

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stopped in its progress, must terminate in a mortification.

Thus important and extensive were the consequences of a popular tumult, dangerous indeed and terrible in itself, but artfully exaggerated and abused by interested courtiers, for the prevention of parliamentary reform, and the discredit of all popular proceedings. When any appeal to the people was in agitation, on any business whatever, it was sufficient to say, "Remember the riots," and the intended measure was immediately relinquished. A glorious opportunity for the growth of despotic opinions! The high-church and high-government bigots rejoiced as if they had gained a complete victory. They already sang Te Deum.

But in the midst of their triumphs, as human affairs are seldom long stationary, the French revolution commenced. Every honest and enlightened mind exulted at it; but the news was like a death-bell to the ears of the sycophants. So large, so powerful a part of Europe emancipated from the fangs of despotism, blasted all the budding hopes of those who were rather meditating the establishment than the demolition of absolute rule. Aristocratical pride was mortified. Every sullen sentiment, every angry passion, rose in the disappointed bosom of that ambition, which seeks its own elevation on the depression of the people. But liberty and humanity sympathized in the joy of millions, restored to the rights which God and nature gave them; and which had been gradually stolen from them by the spirit of despotism, acting, for mutual aid, in alliance with superstition.

But the morning which rose so beautifully in the political horizon of France was soon overclouded. The passions of leaders, jealous of each other,



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menaced from within and from without, hunted by surrounding enemies till they were driven to phrensy, burst forth in tremendous fury. Cruelties, which even despots would shudder to perpetrate, were the effects of a situation rendered dangerous in the extreme, and almost desperate, by the general attack of all neighbouring nations. The friends of liberty and humanity wept; but the factors of despotism triumphed once more. "Here," said they, "we have another instance of the unfitness of the people for the possession of power, and the mischievous effects of excessive liberty." Every art which ingenuity can practise, and influence assist in its operation, was exerted to abuse and vilify the French revolution. Associations were formed to disseminate childish books, favouring the spirit of despotism, addressed to the meanest of the people, who yet had too much sense to be seduced by sentiments, doctrines, and language calculated only for the meridian of the nursery. Prosecutions and persecutions abounded; and it became sedition to hint the propriety of parliamentary reformation. The alarmists, as they were called, were so successful in propagating the old tory tenets, under the favourable influence of the panic of real danger, and the detestation and horror which French murders had justly occasioned, that some of the staunchest friends of the people, men brought into the country at the revolution, owing all their honours and emoluments to it, and hitherto professed and zealous whigs, deserted the standard of liberty, and took distinguished posts under the banners of the enemy.

The spirit of despotism now went forth with greater confidence than it had ever assumed since the expulsion of the Stuarts. Its advocates no longer sculked; no longer walked in masquerade.

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They boasted of their principles, and pretended that they alone were friends to law, order, and religion. They talked of the laws of England not being severe enough for the punishment of sedition, and boldly expressed a wish that the laws of Scotland might be adopted in their place. Active promoters of parliamentary reform were now accused of treasonable intentions by the very persons who were once loudest in their invectives against the corruption of the house of commons. Newspapers were hired to calumniate the best friends of freedom. Writers appeared in various modes, commending the old government of France; and pouring the most virulent abuse on all who promoted or defended its abolition. Priests who panted for preferment preached despotism in their pulpits, and garretteers who hungered after places or pensions, racked their invention to propagate its spirit by their pamphlets. Fear in the well-meaning, self-interest in the knavish, and systematic subtility in the great party of tories, caused a general uproar in favour of principles and practices hostile to constitutional liberty.

It is, however, the nature of all violent paroxysms to be of transient duration. The friends of man may therefore hope that panic fears, servile sycophantism, and artful bigotry, will not long prevail over cool reason and liberal philanthropy. The drunken delirium will pass off, and sober sense will soon see and acknowledge, that the accidental evils, (dreadful as they have been,) which have arisen in a neighbouring nation, during a singular struggle for liberty, can be no arguments in favour of despotism, which is a constant evil of the most destructive nature. The body in high and robust health is most



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subject to the heat of an inflammatory fever; but no man in his senses will therefore cease to wish for high and robust health.

Sensible men, and true friends to the constitution, and therefore to the king, who forms so considerable a part of it, will be on their guard against false alarms excited by courtiers; lest in the fear of some future evil, from popular commotion, they lay aside that everwaking vigilance which is necessary to guard the good in possession, their constitutional liberty, from the secret depredation of the artful spoiler, who is always on the watch to encroach on popular rights and privileges.

Riots, tumults, and popular commotions, are indeed truly dreadful, and to be avoided with the utmost care by the lovers of liberty. Peace, good order, and security to all ranks, are the natural fruits of a free constitution. True patriots will be careful to discourage every thing which tends to destroy them; not only because whatever tends to destroy them tends to destroy all human happiness, but also because even an accidental outrage in popular assemblies and proceedings, is used by the artful to discredit the cause of liberty. By the utmost attention to preserving the public peace, true patriots will defeat the malicious designs of servile courtiers; but, whatever may happen, they will not desert the cause of human nature. Through a dread of licentiousness, they will not forsake the standard of liberty. It is the part of fools to fall upon Scylla in striving to avoid Charybdis. Who but a fool would wish to restore the perpetual despotism of the old French government, through a dread of the transient outrages of a Parisian tumult? Both are despotic while they last. But the former is a torrent that

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flows for ever; the latter only a land flood, that covers the meadows to-day, and disappears on the morrow.

Dr. Price has a passage so applicable to the present subject, that I shall beg leave to close this section by the citation of it: and on the mention of his name, I must pay a trifling tribute to his memory, which is the more necessary, as his character has been scandalously aspersed by those who are ever busy in discrediting the people and their friends, and who, pretending a love of goodness and religion, blacken with their foulest calumny those who are singularly remarkable for both, for no other reason than that, under the influence of goodness and religion, such persons espouse the cause of freedom, and prefer the happiness of millions to the pomp and pride of a few aspirants to unlimited dominion. Meek, gentle, and humane; acute, eloquent, and profoundly skilled in politics and philosophy; take him for all and all, the qualities of his heart, with the abilities of his head, and you may rank Price among the first ornaments of his age. Let his enemies produce from all their boasted despots and despotical Satraps, any one of his contemporaries whom, in the manner of Plutarch, they may place by his side as a parallel. Posterity will do him the justice of which the proud have robbed him, and snatch him from the calumniators, to place him in the temple of personal honour, high among the benefactors of the human race.

But I return from the digression, into which I was led by an honest indignation against the vilest of calumnies against one of the best of men. These are the words of Dr. Price:

"Licentiousness and despotism are more nearly allied than is commonly imagined. They are both

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alike inconsistent with liberty, and the true end of government; nor is there any other difference between them, than that one is the licentiousness of great men, and the other the licentiousness of little men; or that by one, the persons and property of a people are subject to outrage and invasion from a king, or a lawless body of grandees; and that by the other, they are subject to the like outrage from a lawless mob. In avoiding one of these evils, mankind have often run into the other. But all well-constituted governments guard equally against both. Indeed, of the two, the last is, on several accounts, the least to be dreaded, and has done the least mischief. It may truly be said, if licentiousness has destroyed its thousands, despotism has destroyed its millions. The former having little power, and no system to support it, necessarily finds its own remedy; and a people soon get out of the tumult and anarchy attending it. But a despotism, wearing a form of government, and being armed with its force, is an evil not to be conquered without dreadful struggles. It goes on from age to age, debasing the human faculties, levelling all distinctions, and preying on the rights and blessings of society. It deserves to be added, that in a state disturbed by licentiousness, there is an animation which is favourable to the human mind, and puts it upon exerting its powers; but in a state habituated to despotism, all is still and torpid. A dark and savage tyranny stifles every effort of genius, and the mind loses all its spirit and dignity."

Heaven grant, that in guarding against a fever, we fall not into a palsy!

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## SECTION X.

*When Human Life is held cheap, it is a Symptom of a prevailing Spirit of Despotism.*

There is nothing which I can so reluctantly pardon in the great ones of this world, as the little value they entertain for the life of a man. Property, if seized or lost, may be restored; and without property, man may enjoy a thousand delightful pleasures of existence. The sun shines as warmly on the poor as on the rich; and the gale of health breathes its balsam into the cottage casement on the heath, no less sweetly and salubriously than into the portals of the palace. But can the lords of this world, who are so lavish of the lives of their inferiors, with all their boasted power, give the cold heart to beat again, or relume the light of the eye once dimmed by the shades of death? Accursed despots, show me your authority for taking away that which ye never gave, and cannot give; for undoing the work of God, and extinguishing the lamp of life which was illuminated with a ray from heaven. Where is your charter to privilege murder? You do the work of Satan, who was a destroyer; and your right, if you possess any, must have originated from the father of mischief and misery.

There is nothing so precious as the life of a man. A philosopher of antiquity, who possessed not the religion of philanthropy, who knew not that man came from heaven, and is to return thither; who never heard the doctrine authenticated, that man is favoured with a communication of the divine nature by the holy spirit of God; yet, under all these dis-

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advantages, maintained that, HOMO EST RES SACRA, that every human creature is consecrated to God, and therefore inviolable by his fellow man, without profanation. All the gold of Ophir, all the gems of Golconda, cannot buy a single life, nor pay for its loss. It is above all price.

Yet take a view of the world, and you will immediately be led to conclude, that scarcely any thing is viler than human life. Crimes which have very little moral evil, if any, and which therefore cannot incur the vengeance of a just and merciful Deity, are punished with death at a human tribunal. I now mean state crimes only; such actions, conduct, speeches, as are made crimes by despots, but are not recognised as such in the decalogue; such as may proceed from the purest and most virtuous principle, from the most enlarged benevolence, from wisdom and unaffected patriotism; such as may proceed from mere warmth of temper, neither intending nor accomplishing any mischief; the mere effects of error, as innocent too in its consequences as its origin. But the despot is offended or frightened; for guilt trembles at the least alarm, and nothing but the blood of the accused can expiate the offence.

Yet numerous as are the innocent victims of the tribunal, where to offend the state is the greatest abomination that man can commit, they are lost and disappear when compared to the myriads sacrificed to the demon of war. Despotism delights in war. It is its element. As the bull knows, by instinct, that his strength is in his horns, and the eagle trusts in his talons; so the despot feels his puissance most, when surrounded by his soldiery arrayed for battle. With the sword in his hand, and his artillery around him, he rejoices in his might, and glories in his greatness. Blood must mark his path;

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and his triumph is incomplete, till death and destruction stalk over the land, the harbingers of his triumphant cavalcade.

We hear much of necessary wars; but it is certainly true, that a real, absolute, unavoidable necessity for war, such as alone can render it just, has seldom occurred in the history of man. The pride, the wanton cruelty of absolute princes, caring nothing for human life, have in all ages, without the least necessity, involved the world in war; and therefore it is the common cause of all mankind to abolish absolute power; and to discourage, by every lawful means, the spirit that leads to any degree of it. No individual, however good, is fit to be trusted with so dangerous a deposit. His goodness may be corrupted by the magnitude of the trust; and it is the nature of power, uncontrolled by fear or law, to vitiate the best dispositions. He who would have shuddered to spill a drop of blood, in a hostile contest, as a private man, shall deluge whole provinces, as an absolute prince, and laugh over the subjugated plains which he has fertilized with human gore.

What are the chief considerations with such men, previously to their going to war, and at its conclusion? Evidently the expense of money. Little is said or thought of the lives lost, or devoted to be lost, except as matters of pecuniary value. Humanity, indeed, weeps in silence and solitude, in the sequestered shade of private life; but is a single tear shed in courts, and camps, and cabinets? When men high in command, men of fortune and family, fall, their deeds are blazoned, and they figure in history; but who, save the poor widow and the orphan, inquire after the very names of the rank and file? There they lie, a mass of human flesh, not so much regretted by the despots as the horses they rode, or the arms

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they bore. While ships often go down to the bottom, struck by the iron thunderbolts of war, and not a life is saved; the national loss is estimated by the despot, according to the weight of metal wasted, and the magnitude and expense of the wooden castle:

Ploratur lachrymis amissa pecunia veris! Juv.

God, we read, made man in his own image; and our Saviour taught us that he was the heir of immortality. God made no distinction of persons; but behold a being, born to a sceptre, though a poor, puny, shivering mortal like the rest, presumes to sell, and let out for hire, these images of God, to do the work of butchers, in any cause, and for any paymaster, on any number of unoffending fellow-creatures, who are standing up in defence of their hearths, their altars, their wives, their children, and their liberty. Great numbers of men, trained to the trade of human butchery, have been constantly ready to be let to hire, to carry on the work of despotism, and to support, by the money they earned in this hellish employment, the luxurious vices of the wretch who called them his property. Can that state of human affairs be right and proper, which permits a miscreant, scarcely worthy the name of a man, sunk in effeminacy, the slave of vice, often the most abominable kind of vice, ignorant and illiterate, debilitated with disease, weak in body as in mind, to have such dominion of hundreds of thousands, his superiors by nature, as to let them out for pay, to murder the innocent stranger in cold blood?

Though, in free countries and limited monarchies, such atrocious villainy is never permitted, yet it becomes the friends of liberty and humanity to be on their guard against the prevalence of any opinions and practices which depreciate man, as man, and

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vilify human life. None can tell to what enormous depravity small concessions may lead; when the horror of crimes is gradually softened by the wicked arts of proud intriguers, idolizing grandeur and trampling on poverty.

What shall we think of the practice of what is called crimping? Is it to be allowed in a free country? Are not men bought, inveigled, or forced by it, as if they were cattle, beasts of the field or the forest, and capable of becoming the property of the purchaser or the captor? If a nation should behold with patience such a practice increasing and encouraged by the great, would there not be reason to suspect, that it had lost the spirit of freedom, and was preparing to submit its neck to the yoke of despotism? Is not an impressed sailor or a kidnapped soldier one of the images of God? Is he not entitled to all the rights of nature, and the society of which he is a member? Does poverty disfranchise a man, rob him of his rights, and render his life a commodity to be bought and sold, or thrown away, at the will of a rich man, who is enabled to take advantage of his want, and add to the misfortune of indigence the curse of slavery? Are a few pieces of silver to be allowed, by connivance, if not by legal permission, as the price of blood, when poverty, but not the will, consents to the sale?

Even if boxing were ever to become a spectacle patronised by princes, and encouraged by a people, there would be reason to fear lest man, as man, had lost his value; lest life were estimated of little price; and lest the spirit of despotism were gradually insinuating itself into the community. There would be reason to fear lest times, like those of the latter Roman emperors, were returning, and that men might be kept like wild beasts to be brought on the

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stage and fight for public diversion, and to be murdered for the evening's amusement of fashionable lords and ladies, at an opera-house.

The dignity of human nature, in despotical countries, is treated as a burlesque. A man is less dignified than a pampered horse, and his life infinitely less valued. But in a land of liberty, like ours, every man should learn to venerate himself and his neighbour, as a noble creature, dependant only on God, on reason, on law. Life, under such circumstances, is a pearl of great price. Every human being, under such circumstances, is of equal value in the sight of God. They, therefore, who, in consequence of civil elevation, hold any man's life cheap and vile, unless he has forfeited his rights by enormous crimes, are guilty of rebellion against God, and ought to be hunted out of society; as the wolf, once the native of England's forests, was exterminated from the island.

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## SECTION XI.

*Indifference of the middle and lower Classes of the People to public Affairs, highly favourable to the Encroachments of the Tory Principle, and therefore to the Spirit of Despotism.*

The opinion, that the majority of the people have no concern in political disquisitions, is at once insulting and injurious. They who maintain it, evidently mean to make a separation in the minds of men between the government and the nation. It is insulting to the nation, as it insinuates that they are either incapable or unworthy of interfering; and it is injurious to the government and the whole community, as it renders that power, which ought to be an object of love, an object of terror and jealousy.

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Such an opinion is fit only for a country subject to absolute power, and in which the people, considered only as conquered slaves, hold their lives and all their enjoyments at the will of the conqueror. As it originates in despotic principles, so it tends to produce and diffuse them.

As to the intellectual abilities of the people, it is certain that some of the ablest statesmen, lawgivers, and men of business, have originated from that order which is called plebeian. There is a singular vigour of mind, as well as of body, in men who have been placed out of the reach of luxury and corruption by their poor or obscure condition; and when this vigour of mind has been improved by a competent education, and subsequent opportunities of experience and observation, it has led to very high degrees of mental excellence. Plebeians have arrived at the very first rank in all arts and sciences; and there is nothing in politics so peculiarly abstruse or recondite, as to be incomprehensible by intellects that have penetrated into the profoundest depths of philosophy.

As to the right of the people to think, let him who denies it, deny, at the same time, their right to breathe. They can no more avoid thinking than breathing. God formed them to do both; and though statesmen often act as if they wished to oppose the will of the Deity, yet happily they want the power. And since man must think, is it possible to prevent them from thinking of the government? upon the right conduct of which depend their liberty, their property, and their lives. It is their duty to watch over the possessors of power, lest they should be prevented, by the encroaching nature of power, from leaving to their posterity that freedom which they inherited; a natural right, preserved from the op-

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pressor's infringement by the blood of their virtuous ancestors.

But such is the effect of political artifice, under the management of court sycophants, that the middle ranks of people are taught to believe, that they ought not to trouble themselves with affairs of state. They are taught to think that a certain set of men come into the world like demigods, possessed of right, power, and intellectual abilities, to rule the earth, as God rules the universe, without controul. They are taught to believe, that free inquiry and manly remonstrance are the sin of sedition. They are taught to believe, that they are to labour by the sweat of their brow to get money for the taxes; and when they have paid them, to go to work again for more, to pay the next demand without a murmur. Their children may starve; they may be obliged to shut out the light of heaven, and the common air which the beasts on the waste enjoy; they may be prevented from purchasing the means of artificial light in the absence of natural; they may be disabled from procuring a draught of wholesome and refreshing beverage after the day's labour which has raised the money to pay the tax; they may not be able to buy the materials for cleanliness of their persons, when defiled by the same labour; yet they must acquiesce in total silence. They must read no obnoxious papers or pamphlets, and they must not utter a complaint, at the house where they are compelled to go for refreshment, which the tax prevents them from enjoying at home with their little ones. Yet they have nothing to do with public affairs; and if they show the least tendency to inquiry or opposition, they suffer a double punishment, first from their lordly landlord and employer; and secondly, from prosecution for turbulence and sedition.

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The legal punishments attending the expression of discontent, by any overt-act, are so severe, and the ill-grounded terrors of them so artfully disseminated, that rather than incur the least danger, they submit in silence to the hardest oppression.

Even the middle ranks are terrified into a tame and silent acquiescence. They learn to consider politics as a dangerous subject, not to be touched without hazard of liberty or life. They shrink therefore from the subject. They will neither read nor converse upon it. They pay their contribution to a war, and take a minister's word that it is just and necessary. Better part with a little money patiently, since part with it we must, say they, than by daring to investigate the causes or conduct of public measures, risk a prison or a gibbet.

Great and opulent landholders often exercise a despotism in their petty dominions, which stifles the voice of truth, and blinds the eye of inquiry. If tenants utter a sentiment in public, adverse to the courtly opinions of the great man, who is looking up to a minister for a douceur for himself, his sons, his natural sons, or his nephews, or cousins, the beneficial lease will not be renewed at its expiration. What has such a fellow to do with politics? Fine times, indeed, when rustics dare to have an opinion on the possibility of avoiding a war, which a minister has declared unavoidable! A thousand modes of harassing and embarrassing the subordinate neighbour, who dares think for himself, are practised by the slavish rich man, who, possessing enough to maintain a hundred poor families, is yet greedily grasping at a place or a pension; or, if he be too opulent to think of such addition, which is seldom the case, still views with eager eye and panting heart,

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at least a baronetage, and perhaps a coronet, glittering on high with irresistible brilliancy.

Gross ignorance, unmanly fear of punishment, and obsequiousness to overgrown aristocrats, at once servile and tyrannic, operate in conjunction to prevent the middle and lower ranks from attending to the concerns of the community, of which they are very important members; contributing to its support by their personal exertions, their consumption of taxed commodities, and the payment of imposts.

There is also an habitual indolence which prevents many from concerning themselves with any thing but that which immediately affects their pecuniary interest. Such persons would be content to live under the Grand Seignor, so long as they might eat, drink, and sleep in peace. But such must ever be the prevailing sentiment of a people, whose ancestors have left them in the inheritance of liberty, as an estate unalienable, and of more value than the mines of Peru. Such indolence is treachery to posterity; it is a base and cowardly dereliction of a trust, which they who confided it are prevented by death from guarding or withdrawing.

The middle and lower ranks, too numerous to be bribed by a minister, and almost out of the reach of court corruption, constitute the best bulwarks of liberty. They are a natural and most efficacious check on the strides of power. They ought therefore to know their consequence, and to preserve it with unwinking vigilance. They have a stake, as it is called, a most important stake, in the country. Let not the overgrown rich only pretend to have a stake in the country, and claim from it an exclusive privilege to regard its concerns. The middle ranks have their native freedom to preserve; their birth-

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right to protect from the dangerous attacks of enormous and overbearing affluence. Inasmuch as liberty and security are more conducive to happiness than excessive riches, it must be allowed, that the poor man's stake in the country is as great as the rich man's. If he should lose his stake, his poverty, which was consoled by the consciousness of his liberty and security, becomes an evil infinitely aggravated. He has nothing left to defend him from the oppressor's wrong and the proud man's contumely. He may soon degenerate to a beast of burden; for the mind sinks with the slavery of the condition. But while a man feels that he is free, and fills a respectable rank, as a freeman, in the community, he walks with upright port, conscious, even in rags, of comparative dignity.

While the middle and lower ranks acquaint themselves with their rights, they should also impress on their minds a sense of their duties, and return obedience and allegiance for protection.

To perform the part of good members of the community, their understandings must be duly enlightened, and they must be encouraged, rather than forbidden, to give a close attention to all public transactions. Disagreements in private life are often justly called misunderstandings. It is through want of clear conceptions that feuds and animosities frequently happen in public. The many are not so mad as they are represented. They act honestly and zealously according to their knowledge. Give them fair and full information, and they will do the thing that is right, in consequence of it. But nothing more generally and justly offends them, than an attempt to conceal or distort facts which concern them; an attempt to render them the dupes of inte-



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rested ambition, planning its own elevation on the ruins of their independence.

I wish, as a friend to peace, and an enemy to all tumultuary and riotous proceedings, that the mass of the people should understand the constitution, and know, that redress of grievances is to be sought and obtained by appeals to the law; by appeals to reason; without appealing, except in cases of the very last necessity, which seldom occur, to the arm of violence. I advise them patiently to bear, while there is but a hope of melioration, even flagrant abuses, if no other mode of redress appears, for the present, but convulsion. I would exhort them, not to fly from the despotism of an administration, to the despotism of an enraged populace. I would have them value the life, the tranquillity, the property, of the rich and great, as well as those of the poor and obscure. I would wish them to labour at promoting human happiness in all ranks, and be assured, that happiness, like health, is not to be enjoyed in a fever.

To accomplish these ends, I think too much pains cannot be bestowed in teaching them to understand the true nature of civil liberty; and in demonstrating to them, that it is injured by all excesses, whether the excesses originate in courts or cottages.

And surely those men are neither friends to their country nor to human nature, who, for the sake of keeping down the lower orders, would object to teaching the people the value of a pure representation, free suffrage, a free press, and trial by jury. These are the things that are most likely to endear the constitution to them, to render them truly loyal, chearfully obedient, and zealously peaceable.

It is not the delusive publications of interested and sycophantic associators which can produce this

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valuable purpose. Writings so evidently partial, persuade none but those that are already persuaded; and deceive none but those that are willing to be deceived. Truth only will have weight with the great body of the people, who have nothing to hope from ministerial favour, or to fear, while the constitution is unimpaired, from ministerial displeasure.

Let the people then be at liberty, uninterrupted by persons actuated by tory and high prerogative principles, to study politics, to read pamphlets, and to debate, if they choose it, in societies. The more they know of a good constitution, and a good administration, the better they will behave. Ministry need not hire newspapers, or employ spies. Let them build their confidence in truth and justice, and the enlightened people will constitute its firmest buttress. Let it never be said, that the people have nothing to do with politics, lest it should be inferred, that such politics have no regard to the people.

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## SECTION XII.

*The despotic Spirit is inclined to discourage Commerce, as unfavourable to its Purposes.*

Is man a reasonable creature? Is he then most perfect and happy, when his conduct is regulated by reason? If so, then the boasted age of chivalry was an age of folly, madness, and misery. It was an age in which a romantic imagination triumphed by force over the plainest and strongest decisions of common sense. It was an age in which pride and wanton insolence trampled on the rights and happiness of human nature. To express my idea of it in a word, it was an age of QUIXOTISM, in which Europe ap-



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peared as one vast country of bedlamites. Yet, wonderful to relate, men have lately arisen, pretending to extraordinary degrees of the distinctive faculty of man, professing the most unbounded philanthropy, but at the same time regretting that the age of chivalry is no more.

The truth is, the spirit of chivalry was highly favourable to the spirit of despotism. Every feudal baron was a petty tyrant, little differing from the chieftain of banditti. They were absolute sovereigns over their vassals. Their castles were fortified palaces, from which they issued, regardless of government or law, like lions or tigers from their dens, to deform the land with blood and devastation. What was the situation of the people, the million, in those days of mischievous folly? It was scarcely better than that of the negroes in the islands of America. And are these times to be regretted in the present day? Yes, certainly, by those who pine at seeing the condition of the multitude meliorated, and who consider the unfortunate part of their fellow-creatures as a herd of swine.

At this period of English history, slaves, natives of England, were bought and sold on English ground, just in the same manner as the negroes in Africa. One of the chief articles of export from England, in the time of the Anglo-Saxons was the slave. Slaves were always appendant to manors, like the stock of cattle on a farm. They were attached to the soil, and were conveyed or descended with the estate, under the name of *villains regardant*, *glebæ adscriptitii*. They were never considered as citizens; they had no vote, no rights; and were in every respect, in the eye of the great men who possessed them, like goods, chattels, and beasts of burden.

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As honest labour was considered as slavish, so also was every kind of trade. The only class esteemed, was that which we should now call gentlemen or esquires. And what was their employment? Destruction of their fellow-creatures. They neither *toiled nor spun;* but they wielded the sword, and shed blood under the banners of their chief, whenever he thought proper to wage war with an unoffending neighbour. They were, however, honourable men; all, all honourable men. But honour will not fill the belly, nor clothe the back; and pride was obliged to stoop for food, raiment, dwellings, and all the comforts and accommodations of life, to the villain and vassal; who were exactly in the rank occupied by modern tradesmen, mechanics, and artisans. The gentleman of those days availed himself of their labour and ingenuity, and then despised them. The gentlemen of modern days, who admire the age of chivalry, and who adopt tory and arbitrary principles, would be glad to consider this useful and ingenious class of citizens in the same light. "Perish our commerce, live our constitution. Perish the loom, the plough, the hammer, the axe; but flourish the sword. Sink the merchant ship, but let the man of war ride on the waves in all her glory."

Such sentiments resemble those of the feudal barons, the darkest despots that ever disgraced human nature. The old feudal barons, however, could not always find employment for the sword at home; and Peter the monk told them they would be rewarded in heaven by waging war on Palestine. They embarked with the blessings of the pope on their banners. It was a fortunate event for the despised vassals who were left at home. Both commerce and liberty are greatly indebted to the crusades for their subsequent flourishing state. In the absence

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of the tyrants, the tradesmen and artisans exercised their art and industry on their own account, and gradually acquired a degree of independence. Many of the barons never returned to oppress them. Many returned, greatly injured in strength, spirit, and property. Consequently they lost their power. Charters were now sold or granted, and commerce lifted up her front in defiance of pride, that, looking down from her castle on the ship and manufacturer, despised her lowly occupation, while she envied her opulence. The country was enriched by arts which the nobles deemed vile. The mass of the people acquired property, and with it, power and independence. The tyranny of the feudal system, and the nonsense of chivalry, which endeavoured to create a fantastic merit, independent of virtue and utility, soon vanished when the human mind was at liberty to think for itself; and men were emboldened to act freely by a consciousness of possessing skill and property.

But while the human heart is subject to pride, and fond of power, the spirit of tyranny, which actuated the old barons in feudal times, will manifest itself, in some mode or degree, whenever opportunities occur. Commerce was despised under the late monarchy in France; and commerce, we have reason to think, is looked upon with a jealous eye in England, by those who are violently attached to senseless grandeur.

Men of this description are averse from commerce, not only from pride, but from policy. They see commerce enriching and exalting plebeians to a rank in society equal to their own; and often furnishing the means of luxurious enjoyment and splendour, which they themselves, with all the pride of birth and the presumption of office, cannot support. Though a war may injure trade, and ruin manufacturing

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towns, yet it is eagerly engaged in, if it gratifies the revenge of courts, and the pride of nobles. Its ill effects on commerce may be a recommendation of it to those who exclaim, "Perish commerce, live our constitution." It reduces that aspiring greatness of the merchant, which treads on the heels of the grandee, and overtops him. It bleeds the body which appears in the eyes of the great to show symptoms of plethora. It clips the wings which seem ready to emulate the flight of the eagle. It lops the tree which gives umbrage by its shadow. The favourers of absolute power would have a nation of gentlemen soldiers, of courtiers, and of titled noblemen; and they view with pain, a nation of gentlemen merchants, of men independent both in spirit and fortune, enlightened by education, improved by experience, enriched by virtues and useful exertion, possessing principles of honour founded on honesty, and therefore quite as scrupulous and nice as if they had been bred in idleness, bloated with the pride of ancestry, tyrannically imperious over the active classes, and at the same time abject slaves to courtly fashion.

But, as in a commercial nation, it is impossible to prevent men of this description from sometimes acquiring princely fortunes, it becomes a very desirable object, among the politicians attached to arbitrary power, to corrupt the principal commercial houses, by raising in them the spirit of vanity and ambition. They have already acquired money more than sufficient for all the purposes of aggrandizement. The next object is honour; that is, a title. A baronetage is a charming lure to the whole family. Any favour indeed from the court is a feather. A title is now and then judiciously bestowed. This operates on the rising race, and teaches them to un-

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dervalue their independence in competition with the smile of a minister. The minister, indeed, has means of gratifying the avarice as well as the vanity of the commercial order. Contracts are delicious douceurs to the aspiring trader: they not only enrich, but lead to a connection with the powers that be, and pave with gold the road of ambition.

But the sun of tory favour which irradiates the tops of the mountain, seldom reaches the vale. The millions of humbler adventurers in commerce and manufacture, who are enriching their country, and accommodating human life, in ten thousand modes that require both virtue and skill, are viewed by the promoters of arbitrary power with sovereign contempt. The truth is, that most of these, notwithstanding the disdain with which they are treated, are some of the most independent members of the community. They constitute a very large portion of the middle rank. They are a firm phalanx, and commonly enlisted on the side of liberty. They can scarcely be otherwise; for they have little to hope or fear from those who call themselves their superiors. They perform a work, or vend a commodity, equivalent to the compensation they receive; and owe no obligation beyond that which civility or benevolence, towards those with whom they negotiate, imposes. The customer applies to them for his own convenience. If they be fair traders, they vend their wares at the market price; and if one will not accede to it, they wait patiently for another offer. They do not think themselves bound to make any unmanly submissions to those who deal with them for their own advantage.

A numerous body of men like these, possessing, in the aggregate, a vast property, and consequently, if they could act in concert, a vast power also, can-

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not but be an object of uneasiness to the copartners in a proud aristocracy, wishing to engross to themselves the whole world, with all its pleasures, honours, emoluments, and rights. As they cannot destroy this body, their next endeavour is to vilify it, to render it insignificant, to discourage its attention to public affairs, to lessen its profits, and to embarass its operations, by taxes on its most vendible productions. They would gladly render a tradesman as contemptible in England as it was in France before the revolution. In France, we all know, under its despotic kings, no virtue, no merit, no services to the public or mankind, could wipe off the filthy stain fixed on the character by merchandise. The poorest, most villainous and vicious idiot, who partook of noblesse, would have been esteemed, in that unhappy period, infinitely superior to a Barnard or a Gresham.

My purpose in these remarks is to exhort the mercantile order to preserve their independence, by preserving a just sense of their own dignity. I see with pain and alarm the first men in a great city, the metropolis of the world, whose *merchants are princes*, crowding with slavish submission to the minister of the day, seconding all his artful purposes in a corporation, calling out the military on the slightest occasion, at once to overawe the multitude, and at the same time to annihilate their own civil and constitutional authority. If they would but preserve their independence, and retain a due attachment to the people, and the rights of their fellow-citizens, their power and consequence would be infinitely augmented, and the very minister who buys or cajoles them would hold them in high estimation. Ultimately, perhaps, their present sordid views might be accomplished with greater success; as

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they certainly would be, if accomplished at all, with more honour and satisfaction.

Instead of separating their interests, I would say, let our commerce and our constitution ever flourish together. Certain I am, that a flourishing commerce, by giving power and consequence to the middle and lower ranks of the people, tends more than all the military associations to preserve the genuine spirit of the constitution.

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## SECTION XIII.

*The Spirit of Despotism displaying itself in private Life, and proceeding thence to avail itself of the Church and the Military.*

Many who enjoy the great advantages of distinguished rank and enormous wealth, either hereditary or acquired, not contented with those advantages, seem, by their behaviour, to envy the less fortunate of their species the little happiness they retain in their humble sphere. Unsatisfied with the elevation which their birth or fortune has given them, they wish to trample on their inferiors, and to force them still lower in society. Base pride! sordid greediness of wretches, who, notwithstanding they are gratified with all external splendour, and pampered even to loathing with plenty of all good things, yet insult those who minister to their luxuries, and who (however deserving by virtue all that the others possess by chance) sit down with a bare competence, and often in want of real necessaries, food, raiment, and habitation.

The insolence of many among the great, who possess neither knowledge nor virtue, nor any quality useful to mankind, and the contempt with which they look down upon men, whom, though both virtuous

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and useful, they call their inferiors, excites the honest indignation of all who can think and feel, and who are remote from the sphere of corrupting influence. The natural sensations of an honest heart revolt against it. It is not only most highly culpable in a moral view, but extremely dangerous in a political. It arises from the genuine spirit of despotism, and if not checked by the people, must lead to its universal prevalence. Such a spirit would allow no rights to the poor, but those which cannot be taken away, such as the swine possess; the rights of mere animal nature. Such a spirit hates the people, and would gladly annihilate all of them, but those who administer to pride and luxury, either as menial servants, dependent tradesmen or mechanics, or common soldiers, ready to shed their own and others' blood for a morsel of bread.

If no considerable district of a country be without persons animated with this spirit; if they are viewed without abhorrence, and considered as assuming only the common privileges of country gentlemen; if such men, availing themselves of a corrupt state of representation, often procure a share in the legislature; is not that country, if there be such a one, in danger of being over-run with despotism? Are not the yeomanry, who are usually tenants of these persons, likely to be influenced by them, through fear of losing their farms, in their votes, and in all their sentiments and conduct? And will not liberty lose some of her ablest, as they were probably among her sincerest and manliest, defenders, when the yeomanry desert her banners?

Among all that description of persons who have been lately called Aristocrats, proud and selfish in their nature, Tories and Jacobites in their political principles, it is obvious to remark the most haughty,

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overbearing manners in the transactions of common life, in their domestic arrangements, in their pleasurable excursions, their visits, their conversation, and general intercourse. In all these, their grand object is to keep the vulgar, under which appellation they comprehend many truly, though not nominally, noble, at a distance. They herd in exclusive sets, and form a little world of their own, and entitle it, the circles of fashion. Folly and vanity govern this little world with despotic rule; and virtue, learning, usefulness, have no claim to admission into it. Pride, servility to courts, and a mutual though tacit agreement to treat the people with contempt, are among the principal recommendations to it. The grand secret of its constitution is to claim dignity, distinction, power, and place, exclusively, without the painful labour of deserving either by personal merit or by services to the commonwealth.

These people push themselves forward to notice at all public places. Though they contribute no more than others to the support of such places, (for they are generally parsimonious,) yet they claim a right to dictate every regulation. Countenanced by each other, they assume at theatres a bold behaviour, such as argues a sovereign contempt of the canaille. They talk loud, they laugh loud, they applaud each other's wit, they strut with airs of perfect self-complacency; but would not be supposed to cast an eye at the inferior crowd, whose admiration they are at the same time courting, by every silly effort of pragmatical vanity. They cannot live long at home. No; they must have the eyes of the very people whom they affect to despise, constantly upon their persons, their coaches, their livery servants; or else wealth loses its power to gratify, and grandeur is no better than insignificance.

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Nothing flatters such persons more, than to have a number of their fellow-creatures engaged as servants about their persons, with nothing to do, or with such employments as a man, properly so called, could not endure to have done by another. It adds greatly to their happiness, if they can clothe these superfluous menials in very fine and costly dress, far exceeding any thing which the middle (yet independent) ranks of the people can either afford or would choose to display. They also choose that their footmen should be handsome in their persons, as well as sumptuously clad; the intention being to lead the spectator to exclaim, when even the servants are such respectable personages, "how stupendously great must be the lordly master!"

A court, with all its forms and finery, is the very element of such persons. They flutter about it like butterflies in the sunshine; and happy he, who, in his way to it, excites the most admiration of his gaudy coach and coat in the crowd of St. James's-street; that crowd, which nevertheless they scorn, through fear of pollution, to look at, with eyes destined in a few minutes to enjoy the beatific vision of royalty. But as a court is their delight, no wonder that their sentiments on political matters are perfectly courtier-like. They are for extending the powers and prerogatives of royalty, from a selfish idea that they can recommend themselves to the notice and patronage of courts by servile compliance, by riches and pomp; whereas the people would require personal merit as the passport to their favour. They think the people have little to bestow but bare esteem, or such offices as are honourable only in proportion as they are well or ill discharged; such as require virtues and abilities: whereas a court can bestow on its favourites, without requiring pain-

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ful virtues, ribands, garters, stars, and titles, all which gratify superficial minds by their external finery and distinction, independently of any idea that they are, or should be, the public rewards of long and faithful services, in promoting the welfare of the community, and the happiness of the human race.

To form an adequate idea of the proud and frivolous minds of those who are intent on nothing but aggrandizing themselves by augmenting the power of courts and ministers, whose favour they seek with the most despicable meanness, it will be necessary to entertain right notions of the court of France, and the manners of the noblesse, previously to the revolution. "The two great aims" says an observing French writer, "of the modern courtiers of France, like some of another nation, were dissipation, and the means of repairing the ruinous consequences of that dissipation to their private fortunes. To obtain the former end, they pursued her through all the fantastical labyrinth of versatile folly; and to accomplish the latter, they startled at no depravity or corruption which presented itself." Thus the greatest personages in the nation were most distinguishable for vice and meanness; the sole object was to indulge in every vain and every sensual gratification, and then to procure places and appointments, the profits of which were to pay the expenses of pride and debauchery. The financier robbed the people. The great (as they are abusively called) received the stolen goods; and the people, in return for their property thus extorted from them, were at once oppressed, plundered, and despised. If a nobleman, impoverished by his enormous vices and silly vanity, married into a rich but plebeian family, they called this degrading conduct, the taking dung to fertilize their estates. At the same time, pollution

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as it was to marry the honest daughter of an honest merchant, they prided themselves in choosing for mistresses not only the lowest, but the most vicious persons, opera-dancers and actresses notorious for prostitution. Such were many of the courtiers, the noblesse, and sticklers for arbitrary power in France; and have there not appeared in other nations, instances of similar conduct in persons of similar rank, and similar political principles?

In France, bishoprics were usually considered as genteel provisions for the sons of noble families. Religious considerations had rarely any influence in the appointment of them. Learning was not a sufficient recommendation. Blood was the prime requisite. If by chance a man, with every kind of merit proper for that station, rose to a bishopric, without the recommendation of blood, he was despised by the fraternity, and called a bishop of fortune. I have heard in England such men as Dr. Secker, Dr. Watson, or Dr. Horsley, with all their learning, spoken of as men that must not think themselves of any political consequence; as men who should be satisfied with their good fortune, and not pretend to vie with the Beresfords, Norths, and Cornwallises, the Vernons and the Manners Suttons. How would men holding such opinions, have despised Jesus Christ and the poor fishermen! yet they love bishoprics, so far as they contribute to secular pomp and parade, and as they enrich the families of boroughmongers; and enable them cheaply to reward their tutors and obsequious dependents.

A similar spirit must produce similar conduct. Therefore those who would not wish the manners of the French, as they existed before the revolution, to prevail in their own country, will check the spirit

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that gives rise to such manners, by every rational means of opposition to it. That spirit and those manners at once supported the French monarchy, and caused its abolition.

Indeed, the overbearing manners of the *Tories*, or friends of arbitrary power, are so disgusting in private life to every man of sense and independence, that they must be exploded, wherever sense and independence can prevail over the arts of sycophantism. They are no less offensive to humanity, and injurious to all the sweet equality of social intercourse, than they are to public liberty.

These proud pretenders to superiority, these sneaking slaves of courts, and tyrants of their households, would monopolize not only all the luxuries of habitation, food, raiment, vehicles, attendants, but all notice, all respect, all consideration. The world was made for them, and such as they, to take their pastime in it. Their family, their children, their houses, must all be kept from plebeian contamination. The well-barred portals, however, fly open at the approach of lords and dukes; and they themselves would lick the shoes of a minister, if one should, for the sake of securing the influence of their wealth in parliament, condescend to enter their mansion.

The aristocratical insolence is visible where one would least expect it; where all the partakers of this frail and mortal state should appear in a state of equality; even at church, in the immediate presence of Him who made high and low, rich and poor; and where the gilded and painted ornaments on the walls seem to mock the folly of all human pride. The pew of the great man is raised above the others, though its elevation is an obstacle both to the eyes and ears

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of those who are placed in its vicinity. It is furnished with curtains, adorned with linings, and accommodated with cushions. Servants walk in his train, open the door of his luxurious seat, and carry the burden of the prayer-book. The first reverence is paid to persons of condition around. Those who do not bow to the name of Jesus Christ, bend with all lowliness to the lord in the gallery. The whole behaviour leads a thinking man to conclude, that the self-important being would scarcely deign to enter Heaven, any more than he does the church, if he must be reduced to an equality with the rustic vulgar.

Such persons, consistently with their arbitrary principles, are always high-churchmen. Though they may be indifferent to religion, they are zealous for the church. They consider the church as useful, not only in providing genteelly for relations and those to whom they owe obligations for private services, but as an engine to keep down the people. Upon the head of their despot, they would put a triple covering, the crown, the mitre, and the helmet. The Devil offered our Saviour all the kingdoms of this world and their glory, if he would fall down and worship him; and there is reason to fear, that such idolaters of the kingdoms of this world and their glory would apostatize from him who said *his kingdom was not of this world*, if the same evil being were to make them the same offer. The temporalities and splendours of the church triumphant endear it to them; but, if it continued in its primitive state, or in the condition in which it was when poor fishermen were its bishops, they would soon side, in religious matters, with the philosophers of France. But while mitres and stalls may be made highly subservient to the views of a minister, and the promoters of arbitrary power and principles, they honour the



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church, though they know nothing of Christ, they stickle for the bench, though they abandon the creed. An ally, like the church, possessed of great power, must be cherished; though the very persons who wish to avail themselves of that power, would be the first, if that power were in real danger, to question its rights, and to accelerate its subversion.

There is one circumstance in the conduct of the Tory friends to absolute sway truly alarming to the champions of liberty. They are always inclined, on the smallest tumult, to call in the military. They would depreciate the civil powers, and break the constable's staff to introduce the bayonet. In their opinion, the best executive powers of government are a party of dragoons. They are therefore constantly sounding alarms, and aggravating every petty disturbance into a riot or rebellion. They are not for parleying with the many-headed monster; they scorn lenient measures; and while their own persons are in perfect safety, boldly command the military to fire. What is the life or the limb of a poor man, in their opinion? Not so much as the life or limb of a favourite pointer or racehorse. They are always eager to augment the army. They would build barracks in every part of the country, and be glad to see a free country overrun, like some of the enslaved nations of the continent, from east to west, from north to south, with men armed to overawe the saucy advocates of charters, privileges, rights, and reformations.

Against principles so dangerous in public life, and odious in private, every friend to his king and country, every lover of his fellow-creatures, every competent judge of those manners, which sweeten the intercourse of man with man, will show a determined opposition. But how shall he show it with effect? By ridicule. Nothing lowers the pride from which

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such principles proceed, so much as general contempt and derision. The insolence of petty despots in private life should be laughed at by an Aristophanes, while it is rebuked by a Cato.

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## SECTION XIV.

*The despotic Spirit inclined to avail itself of Spies, Informers, false Witnesses, pretended Conspiracies, and self-interested Associations affecting Patriotism.**

It is not unfair to infer the existence of similar principles from similarity of conduct. In that black page of history which disgraces human nature; I mean the records of the Roman emperors in the decline of Roman virtue; we read, that spies and informers were considered as necessary functionaries of government; that they became favourites at court, and were encouraged by rewards due only to exemplary patriotism and public service. There have been periods also in the history of England, when spies, informers, false witnesses, and pretended plots, were deemed lawful and useful expedients by the rulers of the state. In testimony of this assertion, we need only call to mind the pretended Popish plot, with all its villainous circumstances, in the reign of Charles the second; a reign in many parts of it resembling the times of the Roman Tiberius. But at whatever period spies, informers, false witnesses, and pretended plots, are adopted by men

* "Sub Tiberio Cæsare fuit accusandi frequens et pæne publica rabies, quæ omni civili bello graviùs togatam civitatem confecit. Excipiebatur ebriorum sermo, simplicitas jocantium."

Seneca de Benef.

"Under Tiberius Cæsar the rage of accusing or informing was so common as to harass the peaceful citizens more than a civil war. The words of drunken men, and the unguarded joke of the thoughtless, were taken down and handed to the emperor."



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in power, to strengthen themselves in office, and destroy virtuous opposition, there is reason to fear, in spite of all professions of the contrary, that the tyrannic spirit of the degenerate Cæsars waits but for opportunities to display itself in acts of Neronian atrocity. Power is deficient; but inclination is equally hostile to the mass of mankind, denominated the People, whom some politicians scarcely condescend to acknowledge as possessed of any political existence.

The employment of spies and informers is a virtual declaration of hostilities against the people. It argues a want of confidence in them. It argues a fear and jealousy of them. It argues a desire to destroy them by ambuscade. It is, in civil government, what stratagems are in a state of war. It tends also to excite retaliation.

A ministry must be sadly corrupt, and unworthy the confidence either of king or people, which can so far degrade itself as to require the assistance of the vilest of the human race. Such are the whole race of spies, sycophants, (I use the word in its proper sense,) informers, and false witnesses. So great is the unfortunate corruption of human nature, that men have been always found to execute the most infamous offices, when a government has thought proper to seek their cooperation. Extreme poverty, united with extreme profligacy of conduct, and a total destitution of moral and religious principle, prepare men for the most nefarious deeds which tyrants can meditate. For tyrants only, the robbers and murderers of men, be such miscreants reserved. Tacitus has called them *Instrumenta regni, the implements of government*, when government falls into hands which are skilled in the use of no better; into the hands of Neros and Caligulas. May

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the minister of a free country, who has recourse to such tools, be himself the first to feel their destroying edge!

Seneca, in the quotation at the head of this section, has handed down a circumstance, in the reign of Tiberius, which must cause every man, who has a just regard for the comforts of free intercourse and conversation, to shudder at the prospect of being governed by a system supported by spies and informers. He tells us, that the convivial merriment of friends assembled over a glass, the innocent raillery and banter of jocular conversation, were, through the encouragement given to informers by the government, made the grounds of a serious charge of sedition and treason. The words of the drunken, and the unguarded openness of the joker, were taken hold of, by persons who mixed with the guests, in order to recommend themselves to government, by reporting the free language that might escape in the hour of unreserved confidence; when the heart is opened by friendship, and the tongue loosened by wine.

"He who dippeth with me in the dish, the same shall betray me," said our Saviour. But be it remembered, that the same persons who hired and paid Judas Iscariot, crucified Jesus Christ.

But what shall we say? Have there been no Judas Iscariots in modern days? Have our coffee-houses, taverns, and places of public amusement, been quite free from hired wretches, who, while they dipped in the same dish with us, were seeking to betray us, if possible, to prisons and to death? Did they this wickedness of themselves, or were they hired and paid by persons influenced by Tory principles or high in office? Have not certain spies confessed, at solemn trials, that they were hired and paid by men

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in office? Have not the same spies led to those extravagant speeches, or those offensive measures, which they afterwards informed against for hire; hoping to deprive the persons they betrayed either of liberty or life? If such things have been, is it not time to be alarmed, to guard against spies, informers, and false witnesses? And is it not right to express, and increase, if possible, the public indignation against both them and their employers?

When men high in office, of reputed abilities, and certainly possessing extensive knowledge, patronise such miscreants as spies and informers, they certainly corrupt the public morals, by leading the people, over whom their examples must always have great influence, to believe, that treachery, perjury, and murder are crimes of a venial nature. They teach men to carry the profligacy of public characters and conduct into the sequestered walks of private life. They teach one of the most corrupting maxims; for they teach, "That when ends eagerly desired by knaves in power are to be accomplished, the means must be pursued, however base and dishonest." They destroy at once the confidential comforts and the most valuable virtues of private life.

But state-necessity is urged in defence of that policy which employs spies and informers. I deny the existence of such necessity. There are excellent laws, and there are magistrates and officers dispersed all over the kingdom, who are bound to take cognizance of any illegal and injurious practices, and to prevent them by a timely interference. If such magistrates and officers neglect their duty, it is incumbent on those who appointed them, and who are amply paid for their vigilance, to institute prosecutions, to punish and to remove them. The law

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knows nothing of spies and informers. The only watchmen it recognises are magistrates, regularly appointed. The whole body of a people, well governed and consequently contented with their governors, are the natural and voluntary guardians against seditions, treasons, and conspiracies to subvert the state. When spies and informers are called in, it argues a distrust of the magistrates, and of the whole body of the people. It argues an endeavour to govern in a manner unauthorized by that constitution which the employers of spies and informers pretend to protect, by instruments so dangerous and unjustifiable.

I have a better opinion of men in power, in our times, corrupting as the possession of power is allowed to be, than to believe that any of them would hire a false witness. But let them be assured, that a hired spy and informer will, by an easy transition, become a false witness, even in trials where liberty and life are at stake. In trials of less consequence, there is no doubt but that his conscience will stretch with the occasion. His object is not truth or justice; but filthy lucre; and when he aspires at great rewards, great must be his venture. Having once broken down, as a treacherous spy, the fences of honour and conscience, nothing but fear will restrain him, as a witness, from overleaping the bounds of truth, justice, and mercy. He will rob and murder under the forms of law; and add to the atrocity of blood-guiltiness, the crime of perjury. No man is safe, where such men are countenanced by officers of state. They themselves may perish by his false tongue; suffering the vengeance due to their base encouragement of a traitor to the public, by falling unpitied victims to his disappointed treachery. The

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pestilential breath of spies and informers is not to be endured in the pure healthy atmosphere of a free state. It brings with it the sickly despotism of oriental climes.

But how ominous to liberty, if large associations of rich men, either possessing or expecting places, pensions, and titles for themselves or their relations, should ever take upon themselves the office of spying and informing! by their numbers braving the shame, and evading the personal responsibility, that would fall on an individual or unconnected spy or informer! Such an association would be a most dangerous conspiracy of sycophants against a free constitution. If the public should ever behold the venal tribe thus undermining the fair fabric of liberty, and behold them without indignation, would it not give reason to suspect, that the Tory and Jacobite principles, or the spirit of despotism had pervaded the body of the people?

The honest, independent, and thinking part of the community will be justly alarmed when they see either individuals or bodies of men encouraged by ministerial favours, in calumniating the people, and falsely accusing the advocates of constitutional freedom. They will think it time to stem the torrent of corruption, which, rolling down its foul but impetuous tide from the hills, threatens devastation to the cottages in the valley. But how shall they stop an evil, promoted and encouraged, for private and selfish motives, by the whole influence of grandeur and opulence acting in combination? By bearing their testimony in favour of truth and justice; by giving their suffrages to honest men; by rejecting the servile adulator of courts, and the mean sycophant of ministers: and by shunning as pestilences every

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description of spies and informers, whether poor or rich, mercenary or volunteer.* If they fail, they will feel the comfort of having discharged their duty.

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## SECTION XV.

*The Manners of Tory Courtiers, and of those who ape them, as People of Fashion, inconsistent with Manliness, Truth, and Honesty; and their Prevalence injurious to a free Constitution, and the Happiness of Human Nature.*

Among a thousand anecdotes of the frivolity of the governing part of a despotic country, I select the

* I subjoin a curious passage from the 14th book of Ammianus Marcellinus, on the manner in which spies executed their office, under the imperial authority of Constantius Gallus.

"Excogitatum est super his, ut homines quidam ignoti, vilitate ipsa parùm cavendi, ad colligendos rumores per Antiochiæ latera cuncta destinarentur, relaturi quæ audirent: Hi peragranter et dissimulanter honoratorum circulis assistendo, prevadendoque divitum domus egentium habitu, quicquid noscere poterant vel audire, latenter intromissi per posticas in regiam, nuntiabant: id observantes conspiratione concordi, ut fingerent quædam, et cognita duplicarent in pejus: laudes vero supprimerent Cæsaris, quos invitis quamplurimis, formido malorum impendentium exprimebat."

"Another expedient was to place at every corner of the city certain obscure persons, not likely to excite suspicion or caution, because of their apparent insignificancy, who were to repeat whatever they heard. These persons, by standing near gentlemen, or getting entrance into the houses of the rich, in the disguise of poverty, reported whatever they saw or heard, at court being privately admitted into the place by the back stairs: having concerted it between themselves to add a great deal, from their own invention, to whatever they really saw or heard, and to make the matter ten times worse. They agreed also to suppress the mention of those (loyal songs or toasts, or) speeches, in favour of the emperor, which the dread of impending evil squeezed out of many against their will and better judgment."

The decline of the Roman empire was distinguished by spies and informers: it is to be hoped that the use of spies and informers does not portend the decline of the British empire.

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following, merely as a slight specimen of the trifling disposition of those who, as they pretend, claim their elevated situations for the good of mankind.

"In the summer of the year 1775, the queen of France, being dressed in a light-brown silk, the king good-naturedly observed, it was couleur de puce, the colour of fleas; and instantly every lady in the land was uneasy till she had dressed herself in a silk gown of a flea colour. The rage was caught by the men; and the dyers worked night and day, without being able to supply the demand for flea colour. They nicely distinguished between an old and a young flea, and subdivided even the shades of its body. The belly, the back, the thigh, the head, were all marked by varying tints. This prevailing colour promised to be the fashion of the winter. The silk-mercers found it would hurt their trade. They therefore presented her majesty with patterns of new satins; who having chosen one, Monsieur exclaimed, it was the colour of her majesty's hair!

"Immediately the fleas ceased to be favourites at court, and all were eager to be dressed in the colour of her majesty's hair. Servants were sent off at the moment from Fontainbleau to Paris, to purchase velvets, ratteens, and cloths of this colour. The current price of an ell in the morning had been forty livres, and it rose in the evening to eighty and ninety. The demand was so great, and the anxiety so eager, that some of her majesty's hair was actually obtained by bribery, and sent to the Gobelins, to Lyons, and other manufactories, that the exact shade might be caught and religiously preserved."

Such was the little, mean, adulatory spirit of the court of France, and of the people who at that time imitated the court with more than apish mimicry. To show how little there is of truth and honesty in

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such servility, be it remembered, that the nation so eager to catch the very colour of the queen's hair, soon afterwards murderously cut off the head on which it grew. Nothing silly, nothing overstrained, can be lasting, because it wants a solid foundation. Let kings be careful how they confide in court compliments and the addresses of corruption. Mastiffs guard their master and his house better than spaniels.

While such a spirit prevails among the great, it is impossible that the happiness of man can be duly regarded by those who claim a right to govern him. Were frivolity and meanness are general, it is impossible that the people can be wise or happy. Gaiety, founded on levity or affectation, is not happiness. It laughs and talks, while the heart is either unmoved or dejected. Happiness is serious. The noise of folly is intended to dissipate thought; but no man would wish his thoughts to be dissipated, who finds any thing within him to think of with complacency.

Princes have always something important to think of, which, it might be supposed, would preclude the necessity of trifling amusements to kill time. Yet courts have always been remarkable for frivolity. This frivolity is not only contemptible in itself, unworthy of rational beings, especially when executing a most momentous trust, but productive of meanness, weakness, and corruption. Long experience has associated with the idea of a courtier in despotic courts, duplicity, insincerity, violation of promises, adulation, all the base and mean qualities, rendered still baser and meaner, by assuming, on public occasions, the varnish of hypocrisy.

Erasmus gives directions to a young man, in the manner of Swift, how to conduct himself at court. I believe they have never been presented to the English

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reader, and therefore I shall take the liberty of translating them, not only for the sake of affording amusement, but that it may be duly considered, whether or not persons who form their manners and principles after such models, are likely to be the friends of man, the assertors or the guardians of liberty: whether the slaves of fashion, who seem to separate themselves from others, as if they were a chosen tribe among the sons of men; as if they were made of such clay as forms the porcelain, while others are merely earthen ware; whether, I say, the slaves of fashion, which always apes a court in all its extravagancies, are likely to consult the happiness of the majority of mankind, the middle, lowest, and most useful classes, whom they despise, as an inferior species of beings; as the whites in the West Indies formerly looked down upon the negroes with disdain.

"As you are now going to live at court," (says Erasmus,) "I advise you, in the first place, never to repose the smallest degree of confidence in any man there who professes himself your friend, though he may smile upon you, and embrace you, and promise you; aye, and confirm his promise with an oath. Believe no man there a sincere friend to you; and do you take care to be a sincere friend to no man. Nevertheless, you must pretend to love all you see, and show the utmost suavity of manners and attentions to every individual. These attentions cost you not a farthing; therefore you may be as lavish of them as you please. Pay your salutations with the softest smiles in your countenance, shake hands with the appearance of most ardent cordiality, bow and give way to all, stand cap in hand, address every body by their titles of honour, praise without bounds, and promise most liberally.

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"I would have you every morning, before you go to the levee, practise in making up your face for the day at your looking-glass at home, that it may be ready to assume any part in the farce, and that no glimpse of your real thoughts and feelings may appear. You must study your gestures carefully at home, that in the acting of the day your countenance, person, and conversation may all correspond, and assist each other in keeping up your character at the court masquerade.

"These are the elements of the courtier's philosophy, in learning which, no man can be an apt scholar, unless he first of all divests himself of all sense of shame; and leaving his natural face at home, puts on a vizor, and wears it constantly too. In the next place, get scent of the various cabals and parties of the court; but be not in a hurry to attach yourself to any of them, till you have duly reconnoitred. When you have found out who is the king's favourite, you have your cue; mind to keep on the safe side of the vessel. If the king's favourite be a downright fool, you must not scruple to flatter him, so long as he is in favour with the god of your idolatry.

"The god himself, to be sure, will require the main efforts of your skill. As often as you happen to be in the presence, you must exhibit a face of apparently honest delight, as if you were transported with the privilege of being so near the royal person. When once you have observed what he likes and dislikes, your business is done."

He proceeds to advise his pupil to pursue his own interest, regardless of all honour and honesty, whenever they may be violated without detection. He tells him, in consulting his interest, to pay more court to enemies than friends, that he may turn their hearts,

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and bring them over to his side. I cannot, in this place, give the whole of the letter; but the curious reader may find it under number fifty-seven, in the twenty-eighth book of the London edition.

Erasmus drew from the life. Though a most profound scholar, yet he was not merely a scholar. He read the book of the world with as much accuracy as the volumes of his library. I have brought forward this letter, because I find it exemplified in the Precepts of Lord Chesterfield, and the Diary of Lord Melcombe. It appears, under the testimony of their own hands, that these men actually were the characters which Erasmus, in a vein of irony and sarcasm, advises his court-pupil to become. It appears from them, that many of the persons, with whom they acted, were similar. It follows that, if such men were great, wise, and good men, truth, honour, sincerity, friendship, and patriotism, are but empty names, devised by politicians to amuse and to delude a subject and an abject people.

But the people (I mean not a venal mob, employed by a minister or by a faction) are not so corrupted. They value truth, honour, sincerity, and patriotism; and in their conduct often display them in their utmost purity. Shall courtiers, then, be listened to, when they represent the people as a swinish multitude, or as venal wretches? Shall courtiers, such as Lord Melcombe, claim an exclusive right to direct human affairs, influencing senates to make and unmake laws at pleasure, and to cry havoc, when they please, and let slip the dogs of war on the poor, either at home or abroad? Shall a whole nation be proud to mimic a court, not only in dress, amusements, and all the vanity of fashion, but in sentiments, in morals, in politics, in religion, in no religion, in hypocrisy, in cruelty?

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Lord Melcombe and Lord Chesterfield were leading men, able men, eloquent men, considered in their day as ornaments of the court and of the nation. But if even they exhibit both precepts and examples of extreme selfishness, of deceit, and of a total disregard to human happiness, what may we think of their numerous dependents, under-agents, persons attached to them by places, pensions, ribands, titles, expecting favours for themselves, or their natural children, or their cousins? Can we suppose these men to retain any regard for the public? Would they make any sacrifice to the general happiness of human nature? Would they assert liberty, or undergo trouble, loss, persecution, in defence of a constitution? They themselves would laugh at you, if you should suppose it possible. They can be considered in no other light than as vermin, sucking the blood of the people whom they despise.

Yet these, and such as these, are the men who are indefatigable in declaiming against the people, talking of the mischiefs of popular government, and the danger of admitting the rights of man. These, and such as these, are the strenuous opposers of all reform in the representation. These, and such as these, call attempts at innovations, though evidently improvements, seditious. These are the alarmists, who cry out the church or the state is in danger, in order to persecute honest men, or to introduce the military. The military is their delight and their fortress; and to compass their own base ends, they will not hesitate to bathe their arms in human blood, even up to their very shoulders. Their whole object is to aggrandize a power, of which they pant to participate; and from which alone, destitute as they are of merit and goodness, they can hope for lucre and the distinctions of vanity.

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"Where the ruling mischief," says the author of the Estimate, "prevails among the great, then even the palliative remedies cannot easily be applied. The reason is manifest: a coercive power is wanting. They who should cure the evil are the very delinquents; and moral and political physic no distempered mind will ever administer to itself.

"Necessity therefore, and necessity alone, must in such a case be the parent of reformation. So long as degenerate and unprincipled manners can support themselves, they will be deaf to reason, blind to consequences, and obstinate in the long-established pursuit of gain and pleasure. In such minds, the idea of a public has no place. Nor can such minds be ever awakened from their fatal dream, till either the voice of an abused people rouse them into fear, or the state itself totter, through the general incapacity, cowardice, and disunion of those who support it.

"Whenever this compelling power, necessity, shall appear, then, and not till then, may we hope that our deliverance is at hand. Effeminacy, rapacity, and faction will then be ready to resign the reins they would now usurp. One common danger would create one common interest. Virtue may rise on the ruins of corruption.

"One kind of necessity, and which I call an internal necessity, would arise, when the voice of an abused people should rouse the great into fear.

"I am not ignorant, that it hath been a point of debate, whether, in political matters, the general voice of a people ought to be held worth much regard? Right sorry I am to observe, that this doubt is the growth of later times; of times, too, which boast their love of freedom; but ought, surely, to blush, when they look back on the generous senti-

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ments of ancient days, which days we stigmatize with the name of slavish.

"Thus runs the writ of summons to the parliament of the 23d of Edward the First:—*The King, to the venerable father in Christ R. Archbishop of Canterbury, greeting: As the most just law, established by the provident wisdom of princes, doth appoint, that what concerns all, should be approved by all; so it evidently implies, that dangers common to all, should be obviated by remedies provided by all. Ut quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus approbetur;—sic et innuit evidenter, ut communibus periculis per remedia provisa communiter obvietur.* A noble acknowledgment from an English king, which ought never, sure, to be forgotten, or trodden under foot by English subjects.

"There are two manifest reasons why, in a degenerated state, and a declining period, the united voice of a people is, in general, the surest test of truth in all essential matters on which their own welfare depends, so far as the ends of political measures are concerned.

"First, because in such a period, and such a state, the body of a people are naturally the least corrupt part of such a people: for all general corruptions, of whatever kind, begin among the leaders, and descend from these to the lower ranks. Take such a state, therefore, in what period of degeneracy you please, the higher ranks will, in the natural course of things, be farther gone in the ruling evils than the lower; and therefore the less to be relied on.

"Secondly, a still more cogent reason is, that the general body of the people have not such a bias hung upon their judgment by the prevalence of personal and particular interest, as the great, in all things which relate to state matters. It is of no



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particular and personal consequence to the general body of a people, what men are employed, provided the general welfare be accomplished; because nothing but the general welfare can be an object of desire to the general body. But it is of much particular and personal consequence to the great, what men are employed; because, through their connections and alliances, they must generally find either their friends or enemies in power. Their own private interests, therefore, naturally throw a bias on their judgments, and destroy that impartiality which the general body of an uncorrupt people doth naturally possess.

"Hence, then, it appears, that the united voice of an uncorrupt people is, in general, the safest test of political good and evil."

Is it not then time to be alarmed for the public good, when great pains are taken to depreciate the people; when the names of jacobin, democrat, leveller, traitor, and mover of sedition, are artfully thrown, by courtiers and their adherents, on every man who has sense and virtue enough to maintain the cause of liberty; that cause, which established the revolution on the ruins of despotism, and placed the present family on the throne, as the guardians of a free constitution? I cannot think such courtiers, however they may fawn, for their own interest, on the person of the monarch, friends, in their hearts, to a limited monarchy. If they could and dared, they would restore a Stuart. But as that is impracticable, they would transfuse the principles of the Stuarts into the bosom of a Brunswick. To expose their selfish meanness, and frustrate their base design, is equally the duty and interest of the king and the people.

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## SECTION XVI.

*The Spirit of Truth, Liberty, and Virtue, public as well as private, chiefly to be found in the Middle Ranks of the People.*

Nemo altero nobilior, nisi cui rectius ingenium et artibus bonis aptius. Qui imagines in atrio exponunt et nomina familiæ suæ.—Noti magis quam nobiles sunt.—Dicenda hæc fuerunt ad contundendam insolentiam hominum ex fortunâ pendentium.*

SENECA *de Benef.*

THE people of this land are usually divided into nobility, gentry, and commonalty. The nobility and gentry seem to be estimated as officers in an army; the commonalty, or the whole body of the people, as the rank and file.

There might be no original impropriety in these appellations; but that of commonalty has been often used, by aristocratical upstarts, with insolence. The commonalty comprise the grand mass of the nation; form the great fabric of the political building; while the gentry, after all, are but the carving and gilding, or the capitals of the pillars, that add to the support of the roof, but constitute neither the walls nor the foundation. The commonalty, therefore, being the main fabric, are worthy, in the eye of reason, of the highest esteem, and the first degree of a patriot's solicitude. There can be no rational end in our go-

* "No man is nobler born than another, unless he is born with better abilities and a more amiable disposition. They who make such a parade with their family pictures and pedigrees, are, properly speaking, rather to be called noted or notorious than noble persons. I thought it right to say thus much, in order to repel the insolence of men who depend entirely upon chance and accidental circumstances for distinction, and not at all on public services and personal merit."



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vernment but the happiness of the whole people, king, lords, and commons.

The commonalty are, beyond all comparison, the most numerous order: and as every individual of them is entitled to comfort and security in a well-regulated nation, the whole together must demand the greatest attention of the philosopher, the divine, the philanthropist, of every man of sense, goodness of heart, and liberality. The pomp and parade, the superfluous luxury, the vain distinctions of the few, sink to nothing, compared, in the mind of reasonable and humane men, with the happiness of the million.

It is certainly true, that the greatest instances of virtue and excellence of every kind have originated in the middle order. "Give me neither poverty nor riches," was a prayer founded on a knowledge of human nature, and fully justified by experience. The middle station affords the best opportunities for improvement of mind, is the least exposed to temptation, and the most capable of happiness and virtue.

This opinion has long been received and acknowledged. I could cite, from the sermons of our best divines on Agur's Prayer, many passages in confirmation of it. I dwell upon it now, for no other reason, but because it has lately been the fashion, among those who are alarmed for their privileges by the French revolution, to run down the people, and to cry up that silly spirit of chivalry which established the systems of false honour, claiming rank and respect from society, without rendering it any service, without possessing any just claim to esteem, much less to public honour, exclusive privileges, and titular distinction. The terms sans culottes, canaille, bourgeoise, scum of the earth, venal wretches, and the never to be forgotten swinish multitude, have been reserved for the people, especially those among

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them who have had sense and spirit enough personally to oppose the progress of despotic principles and practices. Every thing that malice, urged by the fear of losing the ribands, the titles, and the solid pence, which a corrupt and corrupting minister can bestow, has been thrown out, in newspapers hired by the people's money, for the purpose of vilifying the people.

It is time, therefore, that the people should vindicate their honour. What are these insolent courtiers, what these placemen and pensioners, who live on the public bounty, that they should thus insult those whose bread they eat? For the most part, they are persons who, if they were stripped of the false splendour of great mansions, numerous retinues, painted carriages, would appear among the meanest and most despicable members of society. They indeed are to be pitied and borne with, while they abstain from insulting the people; but when their silly pride presumes to trample on the mass of the community, they become deserving of contempt as well as commiseration.

These are the persons whom a patriotic lord describes "as giving themselves up to the pursuit of honours and dignities, as loving the splendour of a court, and attaching themselves to the cause of monarchy, (not from any conviction that monarchy is the most favourable to human happiness, not even from personal attachment to the monarch,) but because they see in the increased power of the monarch the source of additional weight and splendour to those (that is themselves) who surround the throne, and an increase of value to the favours which the sovereign can confer; such as stars, garters, ribands, and titles."

But is a passion, childish from its vanity, and

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diabolical in its unfeeling greediness, to be borne with any longer, when, not content with engrossing the profits of office and the pageantry of state, it dares to speak of the middle and lower classes, as beings scarcely deserving notice, as mere nuisances when not employed in the servile office of administering to aristocratic pride.

Virtue is nobility. Personal merit, useful, generous, benevolent exertion, the only honourable distinction. The trappings which every tailor can make to clothe a poor puny mortal, add no real dignity. In ages of ignorance, they might strike with awe. Those ages are no more. Nor will they ever return, notwithstanding the efforts of petty despots, (fearing the loss of those distinctions which they know they never earned,) to keep the people in the grossest ignorance.

God Almighty, who gives his sun to shine with as much warmth and radiance on the cottage as on the palace, has dispensed the glorious privilege of genius and virtue to the poor and middle classes, with a bounty perhaps seldom experienced in any of the proud pretenders to hereditary or official grandeur. Let us call to mind a few among the worthies who have adorned the ages that have elapsed: Socrates; was he noble in the sense of a king at arms? Would he have condescended to be bedizened with ribands, and stars, and garters? Cicero; was he not a novus homo? a man unconnected with patricians, and deriving his glory from the purest fountain of honour, his own genius and virtue? Demosthenes would have scorned to owe his estimation to a pedigree.

Who were the great reformers, to whom we of England and all Europe are indebted for emancipation from the chains of superstition? Erasmus and Luther; Erasmus, as the monks of his day objected

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to him, laid the egg, and Luther hatched it. But was it Archbishop Erasmus? Lord Luther, Marquis Luther, Sir Martin Luther? Did they, either of them, seek the favour of courts? Were they not among the swinish multitude?

Thomas Paine contributed much, by his "Common Sense," to the happy revolution in America. I need not observe, that he had nothing of the lustre of courts or nobility to recommend him. The virulent malice of courtiers and venal scribblers has blackened him as they once blackened Luther, when they asserted of him, that he was actually a devil incarnate, disguised in the shape of a monk with a cowl. I do not advert to any of his subsequent political publications. I only say, if they are so contemptible as they are said by courtiers and aristocrats to be, why not undertake the easy task of refuting him? Bloody wars and prosecutions are no refutation.

"Who is this Luther?" (said Margaret, governess of the Netherlands.) The courtiers around her replied, "He is an illiterate monk." "Is he so?" (said she) "I am glad to hear it. Then do you, gentlemen, who are not illiterate, who are both learned and numerous, do you, I charge you, write against this illiterate monk. That is all you have to do. The business is easy; for the world will surely pay more regard to a great many scholars, and great men, as you are, than to one poor illiterate monk."

Many did write against him, and poured forth the virulence of a malice unchecked by truth, and encouraged by crowned heads. But Luther prevailed, and we Englishmen have reason to celebrate the victory of truth and virtue over corrupt influence and cruel persecution.

The greatest scholars, poets, orators, philosophers, warriors, statesmen, inventors and improvers of the

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arts, arose from the lowest of the people. If we had waited till courtiers had invented the art of printing, clock-making, navigation, and a thousand others, we should probably have continued in darkness to this hour. They had something else to do, than to add to the comforts and conveniencies of ordinary life. They had to worship an idol, with the incense of flattery, who was often much more stupid than themselves, and who sometimes had no more care or knowledge of the people under him, or their wants, than he had of arts or literature.

The education of the middle classes is infinitely better than the education of those who are called great people. Their time is less consumed by that vanity and dissipation which enfeebles the mind, while it precludes opportunity for reading and reflection. They usually have a regard to character, which contributes much to the preservation of virtue. Their honour and integrity are valued by them, as pearls of great price. These are their stars, and these their coronets. They are for the most part attached to their religion. They are temperate, frugal, and industrious. In one particular, and that one adds a value above all that courts can give, they greatly excel the great, and that particular is sincerity. They are in earnest in their words and deeds. They have little occasion for simulation and dissimulation. Courtiers are too often varnished, factitious persons, whom God and nature never made; while the people preserve the image uneffaced, which the Supreme Being impressed when he created man.

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## SECTION XVII.

*On debauching the Minds of the rising Generation and a whole People, by giving them Military Notions in a free and commercial Country.*

In proportion as great men refuse to submit to reason, they are inclined to govern by violence. They who have the sword in their hands, are unwilling to wait for the slow operation of argument. The sword cuts away all opposition. No troublesome contradiction, no unwelcome truth, will impede the progress of him who uses the *ratio ultima regum*, and mows down all obstacles with the scythed car.

Hence the abettors of high prerogative, of absolute monarchy, and aristocratical pride, always delight in war. Not satisfied with attacking foreign nations, and keeping up a standing army even in time of peace, they wish, after they have once corrupted the mass of the people by universal influence, to render a whole nation military. The aggregate of military force, however great, being under their entire direction, they feel their power infinitely augmented, and bid defiance to the unarmed philosopher and politician, who brings into the field truth without a spear, and argument unbacked with artillery.

But such a system tends to gothicize a nation, to extinguish the light of learning and philosophy, and once more to raise thick fogs from the putrid pools of ignorance and superstition, the bane of all happiness, but the very element of despotism.

The diffusion of a military taste among all ranks, even the lowest of the people, tends to a general corruption of morals, by teaching habits of idleness, or trifling activity, and the vanity of gaudy dress and empty parade.

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The strict discipline which is found necessary to render an army a machine in the hands of its directors, requiring, under the severest penalties, the most implicit submission to absolute command, has a direct tendency to familiarize the mind to civil despotism. Men, rational, thinking animals, equal to their commanders by nature, and often superior, are bound to obey the impulse of a constituted authority, and to perform their functions as mechanically as the trigger which they pull to discharge their muskets. They cannot indeed help having a will of their own; but they must suppress it, or die. They must consider their official superiors as superiors in wisdom and in virtue, even though they know them to be weak and vicious. They must see, if they see at all, with the eyes of others: their duty is not to have an opinion of their own, but to follow blindly the behest of him who has had interest enough to obtain the appointment of a leader. They become living automatons, and self-acting tools of despotism.

While a few only are in this condition, the danger may not be great to constitutional liberty; but when a majority of the people are made soldiers, it is evident that the same obsequiousness will become habitual to the majority of the people. Their minds will be broken down to the yoke, the energy of independence weakened, the manly spirit tamed; like animals, that once ranged in the forest, delighting in their liberty, and fearless of man, caught in snares, confined in cages, and taught to stand upon their hind legs, and play tricks for the entertainment of the idle. They obey the word of command given by the keeper of the menagerie, because they have been taught obedience by hunger, by the lash of the whip, by every mode of discipline consistent with their lives, which are saleable property. But they are

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degenerate, contemptible animals. Compare a bird or a beast, thus broken down, with one of the same species flying in clear expanse of air, or roaming in the forest. Their very looks speak their degradation. The discipline of Mr. Astley causes the fiery steed to bend his knees in apparent supplication. But how are the mighty fallen! when the animal has broken from his obedience to nature, to fall down prostrate before Mr. Astley!

Suppose a whole nation, thus tamed, and taught submission to the command of one of their own species. Be it remembered, the horse, in learning unnatural tricks, submits to one of another species, who is naturally his superior. But suppose a whole nation, or at least the mass of the common people, thus broken in by a skilful rider. Will they not lose all energy? Will they dare, I do not say to speak, but to think of liberty? No; they will sink to the rank of German mercenaries let out for hire, claiming no rights, enjoying no privileges above the swine; a state of degradation at which the spirit of man, unspoiled by despotic government, revolts; and rather than fall into which, every true Englishman, from the palace to the hovel of the itinerant beggar, will be ready to exclaim, in the language of the Scriptures, "Why died I not from the womb?"

Is it not time, then, for the virtuous guardians of Heaven's best gift, liberty, to be alarmed, when they see a propensity in ministers, who have gained enormous power and corrupt influence, to render a whole people military? The gold chain of corruption is thus let down and ramified, in a million of directions, among those who never thought of courts or courtiers; but enjoying a noble independence, the independence of honest industry, chaunted their carols at the plough and the loom, glorying in the name of

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Englishmen, because England is free; and delighting in peace, because peace is the parent of plenty.

But, under the auspices of such a ministry, many an emulous esquire, hoping to be distinguished and rewarded, in some mode or other, by court favours, fond of the dress and name of a captain, and the privilege of commanding with absolute sway, bribes volunteers from behind the counter and the plough. He clothes them in the finest frippery that his own or his lady's imagination can invent. He himself parades at their head; a very pretty sight on a summer's day. And now he is distinguished as a soldier, who before only figured as a hunter of hares or foxes, and a prosecutor of poachers. Ambition, as well as vanity, begins to fire his soul. The raising of so many men in his neighbourhood must please the minister; especially if the esquire uses the influence he gains over the vicinity, in a proper manner, at a general election. If the esquire wants not money, he may want honour. Then let the minister make him a baronet. If he has no sons of his own in the army, navy, law, or church, he may have nephews or cousins. If not these, he must have nominal friends, to direct on whom the favours of ministers, though it proceed not from benevolence, must flatter pride, and add to rural consequence.

The whole of the military system is much indebted for its support to that prevailing passion of human nature, pride. Politicians know it, and flatter pride even in the lowest of the people. Hence recruiting-officers invite gentlemen only, who are above servile labour. "The vanity of the poor men" (says a sagacious author) "is to be worked upon at the cheapest rate possible. Things we are accustomed to we do not mind, or else what mortal, that never had seen a soldier, could look, without laughing, upon a man

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accoutred with so much paltry gaudiness and affected finery? The coarsest manufacture that can be made of wool, dyed of a brick-dust colour, goes down with him, because it is in imitation of scarlet or crimson cloth; and to make him think himself as like his officer as it is possible, with little or no cost, instead of silver or gold lace, his hat is trimmed with white or yellow worsted, which in others would deserve bedlam; yet these fine allurements, and the noise made upon a calf-skin, have drawn in and been the destruction of more men in reality, than all the killing eyes and bewitching voices of women ever slew in jest. To day the swineherd puts on his red coat, and believes every body in earnest that calls him gentleman; and two days after, Serjeant Kite gives him a swinging rap with his cane, for holding his musket an inch higher than he should do . . . . When a man reflects on all this, and the usage they generally receive—their pay—and the care that is taken of them when they are not wanted, must he not wonder how wretches can be so silly as to be proud of being called gentlemen soldiers? Yet if they were not so called, no art, discipline, or money, would be capable of making them so brave as thousands of them are."

When all the base arts which custom is said to have rendered necessary are practised only to raise and support a regular army, perhaps they might, however reluctantly, be connived at by the watchful friend of freedom. But when the major part of the labouring poor, and all the yeomanry, are made gentlemen soldiers, merely to support a minister, it is time for every virtuous and independent mind to express, as well as feel, alarm.

It appears, from the above-cited passage of an author who had anatomized human nature, to find

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out its most latent energies, that the spirit of pride is rendered, by artful statesmen, the chief means of supplying an army. But the spirit of pride is in fact the spirit of despotism; especially when it is that sort of pride which plumes itself on command, on external decoration, and the idle vanity of military parade.

When this pride takes place universally in a nation, there will remain little industry, and less independence. The grand object will be to rise above our neighbours in show and authority. All will bow to the man in power, in the hope of distinction. Men will no longer rely on their own laborious exertions; but the poor man will court, by the most obsequious submission, the favour of the esquire; the esquire cringe to the next lord, especially if he be a lord-lieutenant of the county; and the lord-lieutenant of the county, will fall prostrate before the first lord of the treasury; and the first lord of the treasury will idolize prerogative. Thus the military rage will trample on liberty; and despotism triumphant march through the land, with drums beating and colours flying.

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## SECTION XVIII.

*Levity, Effeminacy, Ignorance, and Want of Principle in private Life, inimical to all public Virtue, and favourable to the Spirit of Despotism.*

"THE constitution of the British government" (says Bolingbroke) "supposes our kings may abuse their power, and our representatives betray their trust, and provides against both these contingencies. Here let us observe, that the same constitution is very far

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from supposing the people will ever betray themselves; and yet this case is possible.

"A wise and brave people will neither be cozened nor bullied out of their liberty; but a wise and brave people may cease to be such; they may degenerate; they may sink into sloth and luxury; they may resign themselves to a treacherous conduct; or abet the enemies of the constitution, under a notion of supporting the friends of government; they may want the sense to discern their danger in time, or the courage to resist when it stares them in the face.

"The Tarquins were expelled, and Rome resumed her liberty; Cæsar was murdered, and all his race extinct; but Rome remained in bondage. Whence this difference? In the days of Tarquin, the people of Rome were not yet corrupted; in the days of Cæsar, they were most corrupt.

"A free people may be sometimes betrayed; but no people will betray themselves, and sacrifice their liberty, unless they fall into a state of universal corruption.

"As all government began, so all government must end by the people; tyrannical government, by their virtue and courage; and even free governments, by their vice and baseness. Our constitution indeed makes it impossible to destroy liberty by any sudden blast of popular fury, or by the treachery of the few; but if the many will concur with the few; if they will advisedly and deliberately suffer their liberty to be taken away by those on whom they delegate power to preserve it, this no constitution can prevent. God would not support even his own theocracy against the concurrent desire of the children of Israel; but gave them a king in his anger.

"How then should our human constitution of government support itself against so universal a change,

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as we here suppose, in the temper and character of the people. It cannot be. We may give ourselves a tyrant, if we please. But this can never happen, till the whole nation falls into a state of political reprobation. Then, and not till then, political damnation will be our lot."

So far a political writer, who strenuously supports the cause of liberty, and who has been, for that reason, lately depreciated. The words just now cited are worthy the serious consideration of every man who wishes to leave the inheritance of liberty, which he received from his forefathers, unimpaired to his posterity. We are jealous of charters, privileges, and laws, but not sufficiently aware of the danger which liberty incurs from degeneracy of manners. But what avail laws preventing constructive treason, and bills of rights ascertaining our liberties, without virtuous dispositions in the people?

A charter, as an advocate at the English bar expressed it, is but a piece of parchment with a bit of wax dangling to it, if men have lost that energy of mind which is necessary to preserve the rights it was intended to confer or secure. The trial by jury, the bulwark of liberty, as we have lately experienced it in very remarkable instances, will be but a tottering wall, when oaths have lost their sanctity, and when truth and justice are considered only as phantoms. What will avail a constitution, when every one is immersed in private concerns, private pleasures, and private interest, acknowledging no public care, no general concern, nothing out of the sphere of domestic or personal affairs, worthy of anxious regard?

I lately heard a sensible man affirm, in a tone of apparent despondency, that in England there was, at the time he spoke, no public. I thought the expression strong, and paused to consider it. I hope it

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was the ebullition of sudden vexation at circumstances, which, when it was spoken, seemed to argue a general insensibility in the people to the blessings of a free country. It was uttered at a time when a zeal, real or pretended, for the ministers of government, seemed totally to overlook, in its mistaken ardour, the public welfare.

"There is no public," said the sagacious observer. I understood him to mean, that from an ambitious attachment to party, in some of the higher ranks; to self-interest, in some of the lower; to general dissipation, in all; the number of independent, liberally minded, and well-informed men, who zealously wished and sought the public good and the happiness of man, was too inconsiderable to effect any great and important purpose. Public virtue must arise from private. Great pretensions to it may be made by the profligate, but they will be found to originate in selfishness, in rancour, in envy, or some corrupt principle inconsistent with a virtuous character and benevolent conduct.

If there be such a defection from private and public virtue, what is to preserve a regard for the constitution, whenever ministerial influence shall so far prevail as to render it the personal interest of great majorities of powerful, because rich, men, to neglect it, or even to connive at infringements upon it? If the people fall into universal corruption, the words liberty and constitution will be considered by them as fit only to adorn a school-boy's declamation. In such a state there will be no more security for the tenant of a throne than of a cottage. A junto, that has no regard for either, and is solely actuated by the love of power, its distinctions and emoluments, may, by distributing distinctions and emoluments on many, and by raising the hopes and expectations of



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more, make the mass of the people themselves (thus corrupted at the very fountain-head) become the instruments of annihilating the best part of the constitution. A limited monarch, whose throne is founded on the basis of a people's affection, and a judicious preference both of his person and form of government, will be as reasonably anxious as any among the people can be, to guard against the prevalence of such corruption, and the success of such corruptors. It is the cause of courts, if they mean to consult their stability, as much as it is of popular conventions, to preserve public virtue, and prevent the people from losing all sensibility to the value of a free constitution, the liberty of the present age, and of ages to come.

I firmly maintain, that the prevention of this popular degeneracy is to be effected, not by political artifices, not by prosecutions, not by sycophantic associations of placemen, pensioners, and expectants of titles and emoluments, but by reforming the manners of the people. Principles of religion, honour, and public spirit must be cherished. The clergy must be independent, and the pulpit free. Books written without party views, intending to promote no interests but those of truth and philanthropy, must not only not be checked by crown lawyers, but industriously disseminated among the people. Religion must be considered by the great, not merely as a state engine, but as what it is, the source of comfort and the guide of conscience. Its professional teachers must be advanced from considerations of real merit and services, and not from borough interest, and the prostitution of the pulpit to the unchristian purposes of ministerial despotism.

No writings of sceptical or infidel philosophers do so much harm to Christian faith and practice, to reli-

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gion and morality, as the using of church revenues and church instruction as instruments of court corruption. The very means appointed by God and the laws, for checking the depravity of the people, contribute to it, when they appear to be considered by the great as little more than artifices of politicians, designed to keep the vulgar (as they are often unjustly called) in subjection to wicked upstarts, possessed of temporary and official power, by intrigue and unconstitutional influence.

It is certainly in the power of a well regulated government, by rendering the church effective, and by good examples and sincere attachment to virtuous men and virtuous principles, to correct the levity, effeminacy, and want of principle in private life, which leads to the loss of liberty. The church will be effective, as soon as the people are convinced that all preferments in it are bestowed on those who have preached the gospel faithfully; and not on time-servers, and the friends and relations of parasites, who have no other view in seeking seats in the senate, but to serve a minister for their own advantage. Till the people are convinced that an administration is sincere in religion, they will be too apt to consider not only religion, but common honesty, as an empty name.

The religious principle being thus destroyed by the greedy aspirants to worldly grandeur, no wonder the people lapse into that dissolute conduct, which seeks nothing seriously but selfish pleasure and private profit. Levity of manners both proceeds from, and produces, defect of moral principle. Effeminacy, the natural consequence of vice and luxury caused by defect of moral principle, precludes courage, spirit, and all manly, virtuous exertion. Ignorance must follow; for to obtain knowledge requires a



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degree of labour and laudable application, which those who are sunk in indolence and sensuality will never bestow. When ignorance is become general, and vice reigns triumphant, what remains to oppose the giant Despotism, who, like a Colossus, strides over the pigmy and insignificant slaves of oriental climes, from trampling on men in countries once free?

Farewell, then, all that truly ennobles human nature. Pride, pomp, and cruelty domineer without control. The very name of liberty becomes odious; and man, degenerated, contents himself with the licence to eat, drink, sleep, and die at the will of an ignorant, base, libidinous superior. The sword rules absolutely. Reason, law, philosophy, learning, repose in the tomb with departed liberty. The sun of the moral world is extinguished; and the earth is overshadowed with darkness and with death. Better had it been for a man not to have been born, than born in a country rendered by the wickedness of government, corrupting and enslaving a whole people, a hell anticipated.

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## SECTION XIX.

*Certain Passages in Dr. Brown's "Estimate" which deserve the serious Consideration of all who would oppose the Subversion of a free Constitution by Corruption of Manners and Principles, and by undue Influence.*

Few books have been more popular than Brown's Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times. He wrote with sincerity and ability; but his unfortunate end, occasioned by mental disease, had a very unfavourable influence on the circulation of his book, and his posthumous fame. Nothing can, however, be more unreasonable, then to depreciate a book,

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allowed by all, at its first appearance, to contain indisputable and important truth, because of the misfortune, or even misconduct of its author, subsequent to its publication. I confidently recommend the following passages to the consideration of every true lover of that free constitution which renders our country conspicuously happy and honourable among the nations which surround it.

"The restraints laid on the royal prerogative at the revolution, and the accession of liberty thus gained by the people, produced two effects with respect to parliaments. One was, that instead of being occasionally, they were thenceforward annually assembled; the other was, that whereas on any trifling offence given they had usually been intimidated or dissolved, they now found themselves possessed of new dignity and power; their consent being necessary for raising annual supplies.

"No body of men, except in the simplest and most virtuous times, ever found themselves possessed of power, but many of them would attempt to turn it to their own private advantage. Thus the parliament, finding themselves of weight, and finding, at the same time, that the disposal of all lucrative employments was vested in the crown, soon bethought themselves, that in exchange for their concurrence in granting supplies, and forwarding the measures of government, it was but equitable that the crown should concur in vesting them or their dependents with the lucrative employments of state.

"If this was done, the wheels of government ran smooth and quiet; but if any large body of claimants was dispossessed, the public uproar began, and public measures were obstructed or overturned.

"William the Third found this to be the natural turn, and set himself, like a politician, to oppose it;

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he therefore silenced all he could by places and pensions, and hence the origin of making of parliaments."

This making of parliaments, I contend, is *fundi nostri calamitas*, the origin of all our present political evil; it defeated the good purposes of the revolution, and tended to introduce the despotism of the Stuarts, under the mask of liberty. It arose from the corruption of the people; and has gone on augmenting it to this very day.

"Vanity, luxury, and effeminacy," proceeds Dr. Brown, "increased beyond all belief within these thirty years; as they are of a selfish, so are they of a craving and unsatisfied nature. The present age of pleasure and unmanly dissipation hath created a train of new necessities, which in their demands outstrip every supply.

"And if the great principles of religion, honour, and public spirit are weak or lost among us, what effectual check can there be upon the great, to controul their unwarranted pursuit of lucrative employments, for the gratifications of these unmanly passions?

"In a nation so circumstanced, it is natural to imagine that next to gaming and riot, the chief attention of the great world must be turned on the business of election jobbing, of securing counties, controlling, bribing, or buying boroughs; in a word, on the possession of a great parliamentary interest.

"But what an aggravation of this evil would arise, should ever those of the highest rank, though prohibited by act of parliament, insult the laws, by interfering in elections, by soliciting votes, or procuring others to solicit them, by influencing elections in an avowed defiance of their country, and even selling vacant seats in parliament to the best bidder."

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Would not this be treason against the constitution? a more dangerous and heinous political crime than any that have been prosecuted by attornies-general? Does not this directly destroy the democratical part of the system, and establish a power independent both of the monarch and the people? Are not both, therefore, interested in putting a stop to such gross violations of law and equity?

"What," continues Dr. Brown, "can we suppose would be the real drift of this illegitimate waste (among the great) of time, honours, wealth, and labour? Might not the very reason publicly assigned for it be this: 'That they may strengthen themselves and families, and thus gain a lasting interest (as they call it) for their dependents, sons, and posterity?' Now what would this imply but a supposed right or privilege of demanding lucrative employs, as the chief object of their views?—We see then how the political system of self-interest is at length completed.

"Thus faction is established, not on ambition, but on avarice: on avarice and rapacity, for the ends of dissipation.

"The great contention among those of family and fortune will be in the affair of election interest: next to effeminate pleasure and gaming; this (for the same end as gaming) will of course be the capital pursuit; this interest will naturally be regarded as a kind of family fund, for the provision of the younger branches.

"In a nation so circumstanced, many high and important posts, in every public and important profession, must of course be filled by men, who instead of ability and virtue, plead this interest (in elections) for their best title.

"Thus, in a time when science, capacity, courage, honour, religion, public spirit are rare, the remaining

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few who possess these virtues will often be shut out from these stations, which they would fill with honour; while every public and important employ will abound with men, whose manners and principles are of the newest fashion.

"Is not the parliamentary interest of every powerful family continually rung in the ears of its branches and dependents? And does not this inevitably tend to relax and weaken the application of the young men of quality and fortune, and render every man, who has reliance on this principle, less qualified for those very stations, which by this very principle he obtains. For why should a youth of family or fashion, (thus he argues with himself,) why should he submit to the drudgery of schools, colleges, academies, voyages, campaigns, fatigues, and dangers, when he can rise to the highest stations by the smooth and easy path of parliamentary interest?

"Where effeminacy and selfish vanity form the ruling character of a people, then those of high rank will be of all others the most vain, most selfish, most incapable, most effeminate.

"Such are the effects of the prevailing principle of self-interest in high life. But if we take into the account all that despicable train of political managers, agents, and borough-jobbers, which hang like leeches upon the great, nor ever quit their hold till they are full gorged, we shall then see this reigning evil in its last perfection. For here, to incapacity and demerit, is generally added insolence. Every low fellow of this kind looks upon the man of genius, capacity, and virtue, as his natural enemy. He regards him with an evil eye; and hence undermines or defames him; as one who thwarts his views, questions his title, and endangers his expectations."

In another place, the same author very plainly

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deduces the corruption of the youth of the nation, the young nobility and gentry in particular, from parliamentary corruption.

"Notwithstanding the privilege vested in the commons of commanding the purses of their constituents, it is not difficult to point out a situation where this privilege would be nothing but a name. And as in the last century the regal and democratic branches by turns bore down the constitution, so, in such a situation as is here supposed, the real danger, though hidden, would lurk in the aristocratic branch, which would be secretly bearing down the power both of the king and people.

"The matter may be explained in a small compass. Cannot we put a case, in which the parliamentary interest of the great nobility might swallow up the house of commons? Members might be elected, indeed; and elected in form too. But by whom might they be really elected? By the free voice of the people? No impartial man would say it. It were easy to suppose thirty or forty men, who, if wanted, might go nigh to command a majority in the lower house. The members of that house might seem to be the representatives of the people; but would be, in truth, a great part of them, no more than the commissioned deputies of their respective chiefs, whose sentiments they would give, and whose interests they would pursue.

"Thus, while power would, in appearance, be centering in the lower house, it would in reality be lurking in the higher.

"This state of things might not perhaps result from any design in the aristocratic branch to destroy the constitution. They might have no farther views than those of gain, vanity, or pleasure. Notwithstanding this, their conduct might have those effects

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which their intentions never aspired to. Let us consider the most probable effects.

"The first fatal effect which offers itself to observation is, that the consciousness of such an increasing and exorbitant power, which the lords might acquire in the house of commons, would destroy all honest ambition in the younger gentry. They would know, that the utmost point they could hope to arrive at would only be to become the deputy of some great lord in a county or borough. All the intentions of such a post can be answered by ignorance and servility better than by genius and public spirit. People of the latter stamp, therefore, would not naturally be appointed to the task; and this, once known, would check the growth of genius and public spirit throughout the nation. The few men of ability and spirit that might be left, seeing this to be the case, would naturally betake themselves to such private amusements as a free mind can honestly enjoy. All hope, and therefore, by degrees, all desire of serving their country, would be extinguished.

"Thus honest ambition would naturally and generally be quenched. But even where ambition continued, it would be perverted. Not useful, but servile talents would be applauded; and the ruling pride would be, not that of freemen, but of slaves."

The above remarks were made long before American independence was established, the French revolution thought of, or the discussions on the subject of parliamentary reform became general. The author wrote the pure result of impartial observation; and what he wrote deserves the serious attention of all honest men, all good members of the community. I will make no comments upon it, but leave it to operate on the mind with its own force.

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## SECTION XX.

*On several Subjects suggested by Lord Melcombe's Diary; particularly the Practice of bartering the Cure of Souls for the Corruption of Parliament.*

It is very desirable that country gentlemen, who are often inclined to show a blind attachment to ministers, as if loyalty were due to the servants of a court as well as to the master, would peruse, with attention, the Diary of Lord Melcombe. There they are admitted behind the curtain, and even under the stage, to see the machinery. There they behold filthy workmen, dirty wheels within wheels, every thing offensive to the eye, and all busy for hire to produce a specious outside show on the stage, for the amusement of the spectators, while the showmen pocket the pence. It would have been worth the while of courtiers to have paid the price of a campaign in Flanders, and the subsidy of a German prince, to have suppressed the publication of Lord Melcombe's Diary. The secrets of the ministerial conclave are there laid open; and the effect is no less disgustful than that which strikes the senses on the opening of a common sewer. Nothing but the most selfish covetousness, the weakest vanity, the meanest, dirtiest, most villanous of the passions! No regard for the happiness of the nation, much less for the happiness of mankind; one general struggle, by artifice and intrigue, not by honourable and useful exertions, for power, profit, and titles! It might be supposed, that the parties concerned were banditti, contending in a cave about the division of plunder. How are the words Lord

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and Duke disgraced and prostituted, when prefixed to miscreants warmly engaged in such transactions! Such men are truly levellers, the enemies of the peerage, the involuntary promoters of equality! In a greedy rapaciousness for themselves, they forget not only the good of their country and mankind, but the interest of their own privileged order.

When little and base minds, like the heroes of Bubb Doddington's Diary, be a rule, every thing, even religion itself, becomes an instrument of corruption. It is well understood by every body, that church preferments, even with cure of souls, have long been used to secure the interest of courts in venal boroughs; but the following passage contains a curious proof of it, under the hand of Lord Melcombe, and under the authority of the then prime minister, the Duke of Newcastle.

"December the 11th, 1753," (says Lord Melcombe,) "I saw the Duke of Newcastle. I told him, that in the election matters (of Bridgwater and Weymouth) those who would take money I would pay, and not bring him a bill; those that would not take, he must pay; and I recommended my two parsons of Bridgwater and Weymouth, Burroughs and Franklin:—he entered into it very cordially, and assured me they should have the first crown livings that should be vacant in those parts, if we would look out and send him the first intelligence.—I said, I must think, that so much offered, and so little asked, in such hands as theirs, and at a time when boroughs were particularly marketable, could not fail of removing, at least, resentments, and of obtaining pardon....His Grace was very hearty and cordial.

"29th. Went to the Duke of Newcastle, and got the living of Broadworthy for Mr. Burroughs.

"March 21st. Went to the Duke of Newcastle—

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told him I was come to assure him of my most dutiful affection and sincere attachment to him, having no engagements to make me look to the right or the left.... I engaged to choose two members for Weymouth, which he desired might be a son of the Duke of Devonshire, and Mr. Ellis of the Admiralty. I supposed he would confirm that nomination—but that was nothing to me.* He might name whom he pleased.—Mr. Pelham told me the King asked him if I seriously designed to endeavour to keep Lord Egmont out of Bridgwater. Mr. Pelham told his Majesty that he thought I would; that I desired him to lay me at the King's feet, and tell him, that as I found it would be agreeable to his Majesty, I would spare neither pains no expense to exclude him. The Duke of Newcastle said he had seen how handsome my proceedings had been; that this was the most noble that could be imagined!... I said, What if I came into the place Sir Thomas Robinson left? He considered a little, and said, Very well, pray go on. I said I would particularly support him in the House, where he would chiefly want it. He said he knew I would. I said, There is my old place—Treasurer of the Navy; I should like that better than any thing. But I added, Why should I enter into these things; I leave it wholly to your Grace. He said the direction of the House of Commons was fallen upon him—therefore he could not choose by affection, but must comply with those who could support him there. I said I understood so; and that I thought I might pretend to some abilities that way; that in the opposition, I was thought of some use there; that in court, indeed, I never undertook much, because he knew I never was supported: but now, when I should

* ——— Tuus, O dux magne, quid optes
Explorare labor; mihi jussa capessere fas est. VIRG.

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be supported, I hoped I might pretend to be as useful there as my neighbours. He said it was incontestably so. I said, that considering that I chose six members for them at my own great expense, I thought the world in general, and even the gentlemen themselves, could not expect that their pretensions should give me the exclusion. He said, that what I did was very great! that he often thought with surprise at the ease and cheapness of the election at Weymouth! that they had nothing like it! I said, I believed there were few who could give his Majesty six members for nothing. He said he reckoned five, and had put down five to my account. .... I said I must be excused from talking any more about myself; that I left it entirely to him and to the King; that I was fully determined to make this sacrifice to his Majesty; that I knew I had given no just cause of offence, but that I would not justify it with his Majesty; that it was enough that he was displeased, to make me think that I was in the wrong, and to beg him to forget it: I would not even be in the right against him; and I was very sure I would never again be in the wrong against him, for which I hoped his Grace would be my caution. He said he would, with all his heart. He took me up in his arms, and kissed me twice, with strong assurances of affection and service."

A few days after, this honest man went to Bridgwater to manage the election, and thus proceeds his Diary.

"April 14, 15, 16. Spent in the infamous and disagreeable compliance with the low habits of venal wretches," the electors of Bridgwater.

If the men of Bridgwater, urged perhaps by want, were venal wretches, what must we think of the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Melcombe? I hope

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my reader will pause, and ponder the words of the preceding passage. They furnish a great deal of matter for very serious reflection to those who regard the true interests either of church or state.

Lord Melcombe's Diary was much read when it first came out; but it has since fallen into neglect. Events, however, have happened in the political world, which render it extremely interesting at the present period. In consequence of the French revolution, much pains have been taken to decry the people, and extol the aristocratical part of society. The tide has run wonderfully, in consequence of false alarms and ministerial artifices, in favour of courts and courtiers. The people have been called, not only venal wretches, but the swinish multitude. Long and tiresome books have been written to run down the people, as destitute of virtue, principle, of every thing honest and honourable, and that can give them any right to interfere with the grand mysteries of a cabinet. But he who reads and considers duly the very striking anecdotes and conversations in Lord Melcombe's Diary, will find, that, in order to see venality in its full growth, and survey sordidness in its complete state of abomination, it will be necessary to turn from low to high life.

The people are often turbulent and indiscreet in their transactions, but they are always honest and always generous. They feel strongly for the cause of humanity and justice. They have a noble spirit, which leads them to view meanness and sinister conduct with detestation. But is there any of this manly independence, this honest openness, this regard for the rights and happiness of man, among those whom Lord Melcombe, so unfortunately for the great vulgar, has introduced to public notice? There is all the deceit in his own character, which

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would denominate a man a swindler in the commercial walks of life. All the transactions of the junto are conducted with the timidity, secresy, duplicity of a nest of thieves, mutually fearing and fawning, while they hate and despise each other from their heart's core.

On the practice of purchasing votes in boroughs, by bartering the cure of souls, the most sacred charge, if there be any thing sacred in human affairs, I shall expatiate more at large in a future section.

This Bubb Doddington, after selling himself, betraying the prince, and offering his six members to the best bidder, was made a lord. He was created Baron of Melcombe Regis, as a reward for such prostitution of principles as ought to have caused him to be branded on the forehead with a mark of indelible infamy.

But can we suppose that there has been but one Bubb Doddington in this country? one Newcastle? I wish the supposition were founded in probability. It would be the simplicity of idiotism to suppose, that Bubb Doddington has not exhibited in his Diary a picture of parasitical courtiers, in all times and countries, where corruption is the main principle of administration.

If such men should, in any country of Europe, influence the councils of princes, and manage the popular assemblies, would there not be reason to be alarmed for the best constitution ever devised by human wisdom? Such men hate the people. They love nothing but themselves, the emoluments of places, the distinction of titles, and the pomp and vanity of the courts in which they flatter and are flattered. They will ever wish for a military government, to awe the saucy crowd, and keep them from intruding on their own sacred pri-

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vileges and persons. The Herculean hand of a virtuous people can alone cleanse the Augean stable of a corrupted court formed of miscreant toad-eaters like Lord Melcombe.

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## SECTION XXI.

*On choosing rich Men, without Parts, Spirit, or Liberality, as Representatives in the National Council.*

It has been long observed, that none are more desirous of increasing their property than they who have abundance. The greatest misers are those who possess the greatest riches. None are fonder of the world than they who have engrossed a large share of it. If they should acknowledge that they have enough money, yet they cannot but confess, at the same time, that they think themselves entitled, in consequence of their property, to civil honours, power, and distinction. They have a kind of claim, in their own opinion, to court favour; especially as they are ready to use the influence, which their riches give them, in support of any minister for the time being, and in the general extension of royal prerogative. Are such men likely to be independent members of a senate, honestly following the dictates of their judgment or conscience, and consulting no interest but that of man in general, and the people in particular, by whom they are deputed? There are no men greedier of gain than such men, and none more attached to those vain honours, which a minister bestows in order to facilitate the movements of his political machine. None will rake so deeply in the dirt to pick up a penny as a rich miser; none will contend more eagerly for a feather in the cap, than those whose minds are weak, empty, and attached



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to the world by the consciousness of being, in great measure, its proprietors.

But what is it to me, as an elector, that the man who solicits my vote has, by great cunning, sordid arts, and insatiable avarice, accumulated great riches? Has wisdom, has virtue, has knowledge, has philanthropy increased with his increasing fortune? Enormous wealth, acquired in the short space of half a human life, may be taken, without any want of candour, in most instances, as presumptive evidence of little principle in the means of acquiring, and as little generosity in the modes of giving or expending it. Perhaps he inherits his unbounded riches. In this case, he has not to plead the merit of industry. His ancestors have left him vast sums of money; when perhaps his own talents would scarcely have earned him a penny, or kept him out of the parish poor-house.

Nevertheless, because he is rich, though totally destitute of parts and virtue, he stands forward boldly as a candidate to represent a city or a county. He finds thousands ready to clamour on his side, and to give him their vote. He can treat bountifully, open houses, and give away ribands plentifully. Therefore he is constituted a senator, a national counsellor, commissioned to vote away the people's money, and to decide on the most important questions of constitutional liberty.

What can he do but put himself into harness, and be driven his daily stage, by the political coachman, the prime minister? He cannot go alone. He has not sense enough to judge for himself in the smallest difficulty. He has not spirit enough to preserve his independence; therefore he will consider himsel. merely as a puppet, to be moved by the higher powers, at their will; a stop-gap, to fill up a place

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which might be occupied by an abler member, whose virtues and talents might serve the public indeed, but would render him troublesome to those who gladly dispense with all virtuous interference.

Let us suppose, for argument sake, four such poor creatures (such I call them, though rich in gold) chosen to represent the city of London, the grand emporium of the world, and, from its number of inhabitants, claiming a fuller representation than any part of the nation. I own the supposition is most disgraceful; for it can never happen, one would think, that such a city should not supply men of the first abilities, for a trust so important and so honourable. But let us suppose the city, from a system of manners favoured by, and favourable to, ministerial corruption, so far degraded as to choose four men of very moderate abilities and characters, merely because they happen to be rich contractors, and of sycophantic dispositions, likely to pursue their own interest by servilely obeying the beck of a minister.

Suppose them once in for seven years. The taverns are now shut up, the advertisements, the canvassing all forgotten, and they commence as arrant courtiers as the meanest tool in power, put, by a paltry patron, into a rotten borough of Sussex, Wiltshire, or Cornwall.

But mark the mischief. As they nominally represent the first city in the world, the measures which they vote for, (because they are bidden, and hope for contracts and baronetages,) are supposed, by foreigners at least, to have the concurrence of the most important part of the British empire. Though the minister may despise them from his heart, personally, yet he avails himself of that weight which the place they represent gives them in the eyes of strangers.



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"The great city is with him," in (the only place he pretends to know it,) the house of representatives.

Their ignorance, their meanness, and their sycophancy, have another effect, highly injurious to all plans of constitutional reformation. "Here" (says the courtier) "are four men sent by the first city in the world. Are they better senators, or more respectable men, than those who are sent from Old Sarum, or any of the boroughs inhabited by beggars, and purchased by lords, as a lucrative speculation?" The probability is, (he will say of them,) that, with more greediness after gain, from the sordid habits of their youth, they have less of the accomplishments and liberality of gentlemen. Their eagerness to raise their families, renders them more tractable tools, in the hands of a skilful minister, than those whose families are already raised, and who, however they may place themselves under the guidance of the peerage, have had an education which ought to have given them enlarged minds and sentiments of honour.

Thus the friend to despotic principles, and the opposer of parliamentary reform, draws an argument from the meanness of rich men, (sent by great cities to parliament merely because they are rich,) against all improvement of the representation. The boroughs, he alleges, send at least gentlemen and well-informed men, though in circumstances comparatively indigent; whereas these great commercial bodies, placing all excellence in the possession of superior wealth, depute men as senators, who are unqualified for any department beyond the warehouse or the counting-house, whose views are confined, and purposes habitually sordid and selfish. He urges, that, from the specimens afforded by great cities, there is no

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reason to conclude that the extension of the right of suffrage would render the representative body more virtuous or enlightened. He doubts whether it would be favourable to liberty. If great bodies depute men only for their property, since they who have most usually want most, none will be readier to sell themselves and their constituents to a minister, for a feather or a sugar-plum, than the representatives of great bodies, delegated to parliament merely because they have inherited or acquired excessive riches, with scarcely any ideas beyond the multiplication-table.

Men deputed to parliament should certainly be far above want; but I contend that riches, independent of personal merit, can never be a sufficient recommendation. It is the most important trust that can be reposed in man. It requires a most comprehensive education, strong natural abilities, and, what is greater than all, a just, honest, upright heart, with a manly firmness, and an enlarged philanthropy.

Can there be any difficulty in finding, at any time, four men of such character in the city of London, or two such in any county of England? Certainly not; especially when the corrupting idea shall be exploded, that property is the best qualification for a national counsellor and lawgiver. Able and honest men are not the most inclined to thrust themselves forward, and to obtrude themselves, much less to enter into competition, when all the influence of riches and ministerial favour will be exerted to traduce their character, to frustrate their endeavours, and send them back to private life with their fortunes injured, and their tranquillity disturbed. The electors must search for such men, and draw them from their virtuous obscurity. Thus honoured, they will go into the senate with the pure motives of

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serving their country and mankind, and return with clean hands, sufficiently rewarded by the blessings of the people.

The city of London, and all great cities, as well as counties, are to be most seriously exhorted, to consider the importance of the trust they delegate at an election, and to choose men of known abilities, and experienced attachment to the cause of the people. They should beware of men, however opulent and respectable in private life, who can have no other motive for obtruding on public life, for which they are unqualified, but to raise themselves and families to fortune and distinction, by selling their trust to a minister. Such men can never be friends to liberty and the people. They contribute, by means of their property, to the general system of corruption, and, perhaps without knowing it, (for they know but little,) promote, most effectually, the spirit of despotism.

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## SECTION XXII.

*Of the despotic Influence of great Merchants over their Subalterns, of Customers over their Tradesmen, and rich trading Companies over their various Dependents, in compelling them to vote for Court Candidates for Seats in Parliment, merely to serve private interest, without the smallest regard for public Liberty and Happiness, or the Fitness or Unfitness of the Candidate.*

The rottenness of corruption, originating from ministers, intoxicated with the love of power, and greedy after the emoluments of office, is sometimes found (especially under the influence of false alarms) to pervade the whole mass of the people, and to infect the very heart of the body-politic. The vitals of liberty become tainted, and, without great efforts, a mortification may be justly apprehended.

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In this corrupt state, little despots, aspiring to court favour, hoping to draw the notice of the minister on their faithful endeavours to serve him, arise in almost every town and village of the country, and in every street of a great city. They claim and exercise a jurisdiction over certain vassals, as they think them, their tradesmen, their tenants, and all others, who derive emoluments from them in the way of their business, or expect their custom and countenance. If the vassals presume to act for themselves as men and freemen, they lose their business, their dwelling places, their farms, and all chance of acquiring a competency. The vengeance of the little despots pursues them; and frequently quits not the chace, till it has hunted them down to destruction.

Even in the city of London, opulent as it is, and independent as it might be, a city which used to be the first to stand up in defence of liberty, an overbearing influence can find its way to the obscurest district, and insinuate itself into the blindest alley. The great merchant or manufacturer, who is necessarily connected with many subordinate traders or workmen, considers the influence he gains from extensive connections in business, as a very valuable and vendible commodity at the market of a minister. Naturally wishing to make the most of his trade, he resolves to treat this connection as a part of his stock, and cause it to bring him an ample return. At least he will adventure. It may be a prize to him, as it has been to many. Much depends on his own prudential management of the commodity. It may lead to a valuable contract, especially if kind fortune should kindle the flames of war; it may open the path to court favours of various kinds; it may ultimately confer a seat in the house, and perhaps a baronetage. This last honour is highly desirable,

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as it removes at once the filth that naturally attaches to the very name of citizen, dealer and chapman.

In the city of London, the majority of electors, who send the few members of parliament allotted to it, are of the middle, and indeed of the inferior rank of shopkeepers, rarely rising to the dignity of merchants, who reside at the houses with great gates, or rather in the new squares, two or three miles north-west of the polluted and polluting city: for such is the insolence of little city despots who are in a very great way, that they commonly despise the freedom of the city where their counting-house stands, and where they gain their plums. They do not condescend to be free of the city. They would consider it as a degradation from their gentility to be liverymen and members of a city company. Liverymen, indeed! What! great men, as all bankers are, East India directors, usurious money-lenders, living magnificently in Portland-place or Portman-square, or the grand avenues to them, to be livery-men! Horrid degradation! The very idea is shocking to the spirit of despotism. It is time enough to take up their freedom of the city, when it is necessary, as candidates, to possess that qualification. There are too many votes to make it worth while to be a voter. These great men, therefore, view the electors as subordinate persons, whom they may send on an errand to Guildhall to vote for the minister's candidate, just as they would despatch a clerk or porter to the Custom-house to take a Custom-house oath, or to do any job connected with the low trade or manufacture which enables them to associate with the fine folk of St. James's.

The elector who goes to the hustings must, indeed, vote upon his oath, that he has received and will receive no bribe. He does not consider the

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lucrative employments and the emoluments arising from the great man's custom, which would be lost on disobedience, as a bribe, and therefore votes against his judgment, conscience, and inclination, without a murmur; especially as his daily bread may perhaps depend on his obsequiousness, and very likely the comfort and security of a wife and a large family.

This conduct of the great men is not only unconstitutional and affronting to the city, but as truly despotic in principle as any thing done by the Grand Seignior. It is mean also and base to the last degree; for the great men usually exert not their influence from friendship to the minister, or to a candidate, or from any regard to a cause which they think connected with the public good; but solely to serve themselves, to provide for poor relations, to enrich or to aggrandize an upstart family, already rendered wretched and contemptible by fungous pride.

The glorious rights and privileges of Englishmen, of which we read and hear so much, are then to be all sacrificed to serve a man, who perhaps went out as a writer to the East Indies, and returned in five or six years, laden with riches; the injured widow and orphan in vain lifting up their hands, and uttering their lamentations over the deaf ocean, while the spoiler is hastening to Europe with that treasure which, as it was gained by extortion, is to be expended in corruption.

Malè parta male dilabuntur.

A prodigious recommendation this, as a representative in parliament of industrious citizens, who have toiled all their lives at the counter, or in the manufactory, for a bare competence!

When nabobs, as they are called, perfect aliens,

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recommended only by riches and court influence, can seat themselves for great cities and counties as easily as they used for Cornish boroughs, there certainly is reason to fear that the spirit of despotism has rapidly increased, and is proceeding to destroy all remains of public virtue among the people. The question naturally arises, if a nabob, a perfect alien, should ever be elected for the city of London; whether, in so large a body as the free-born citizens, and among the livery of London, a man is not to be found who has served a regular apprenticeship, gone through all the gradations of successful trade, and become a member of the corporation, worthy to represent the first commercial body in the universe? Is it necessary to import members, as we do tea and muslins, from China and Bengal? Honesty, virtue, independence, and abilities, must indeed be rare qualities, from Temple-bar to Whitechapel, if not enough of them can be found to constitute a representative in parliament. Must the English oak be neglected for exotics raised rapidly in warm climates; and from the hasty growth of which, very little is to be depended upon, when the wind and weather assail them? A sad encouragement this to the young merchants, traders, and manufacturers who enter regularly on business, and become freemen and liverymen, to find that the most industrious and successful trader, and the best character, cannot secure the honourable appointments and important trusts, in the gift of their fellow-citizens! to find, that persons, who never served apprenticeship, never carried on trade, never became free, never were connected in the city companies, perfect strangers to the corporation, and avowed despisers of them all, shall be made, by the influence of a minister, and the overbearing weight of oriental riches, legislators for the emporium of

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Europe! If such an event were ever to happen, it would discourage all virtue in the rising generation of merchants, traders, and manufacturers; and teach them, that every thing bows to almighty money, however obtained, and to court influence, always ready to favour overbearing and overgrown property. It would be a melancholy symptom of degeneracy among the people. It would show that the manly spirit begins to fade and wither, as it has long done in Turkey and Egypt, under the spirit of despotism.

It is truly alarming to all true Englishmen to see great trading companies using the influence which riches bestow, in seconding the views of a minister, without the least attention to the public good, the preservation of liberty, and the happiness of the human race. It is certain, that men united in corporate bodies will act in a manner which they would be ashamed of in their private capacities; because, when so united, the responsibility appears to be thrown from individuals on the aggregate, and so attaching to every one, can be fixed on none. Such bodies may be truly dangerous, when, from the hope of titles and other favours, the members who compose them, are servilely devoted to the minister; not indeed to the man, but to the favourite at court, who, from his office, has in his hands the means of corruption, contracts, loans, places at the various public boards, appointments in all the professions, and, above all, titles.

Such monopolizing fraternities attack liberty with the club of Hercules. They rise with gigantic force. Reason, argument, the law and the constitution yield to them, as the chaff before the wind. If they should not receive a powerful check from the people at large, who have not yet fallen down worshippers of gold, they must go on to establish, on the banks

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of the Thames, oriental despotism: and it would not be wonderful to see the two sheriffs riding up Cheapside on elephants, with the lord mayor borne in a palanquin, on the necks of liverymen, hastening to prostrate themselves at the feet of a prime minister, now become as great as the emperor of China: it would not be wonderful to see bankers erecting an oligarchy; the great house in Leadenhall-street a temple, and a golden calf the god.

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## SECTION XXIII.

*Of the Pageantry of Life; that it originates in the Spirit of Despotism; and contributes to it, without advancing private any more than public Felicity.*

The proud despise the people, represent them as little superior to the brutes, laugh at the idea of their rights, and seem to think that the world was made for themselves only; yet the proud are never satisfied but when they attract the notice of this very people, by splendour, by ostentation, by the exercise of authority over them, and by insolent airs of self-importance. The people, it must be owned, in the simplicity of their hearts, gape with admiration at the passing spectacle which insults them with its glare, and feel themselves awe-struck with the grandeur of the cavalcade, which would trample them in the dirt if they did not struggle to escape.

Politicians, observing this effect of finery and parade on the minds of the unthinking, take care to dress up the idol, which they themselves pretend to worship, and which they wish the people really to adore, in all the tawdry glitter of the lady of Loretto. They find this kind of vulgar superstition extremely favourable to their interested views. Accordingly, in all despotic countries, great pains are taken to

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amuse and delude the people with the trappings of royalty. Popery prevailed more by the gaudiness of its priests and altars, and the pomp of its processions, than from the progress of conviction. The people, in such circumstances, have indeed the pleasure of fine sights; but they usually pay much more dearly for them than for exhibitions at the theatre; and have this mortifying reflection, as a drawback from their pleasure, that the payment is involuntary, and the sight a political delusion. It insults their understandings, while it beguiles them of their rights; and takes from them the earnings of their industry, while it teaches them to feel their own insignificance.

But not only despots, courtiers, and public functionaries, think it proper to strike the vulgar with awe, by purchasing finery of the builder, the taylor, and the coach-painter; but the titled and overgrown rich men, through every part of every community, where family aggrandizement is procurable without public services, or private or personal virtue. Riches, in such societies, confer not only the means of luxurious enjoyment, but of civil superiority. They assume a value not naturally their own, and become the succedanea of wisdom, patriotism, valour, learning, and beneficence. The great object is therefore to make an ostentation of riches, and to keep the people at a distance, by dazzling their eyes with the blaze of equipage and magnificence. As all the minuter luminaries gravitate to the sun in our solar system, so all these aspirants to distinction and superior importance gravitate to royalty. The crown is the glittering orb round which they ambitiously revolve. They would all therefore contribute, if they were able, to add new brilliancy, new heat, new influence and powers of attraction to their fountain of glory. They turn to it as the sunflower to the sun; and feel their

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colours brighter, and their leaves invigorated, when a ray of favour falls upon them in a peculiar direction. They cannot turn a moment to the people. The popular climate chills them. The gales from this quarter are as the icy breezes from the frozen regions of the north, where the genial beams of solar influence can scarcely penetrate.

It may then be fairly presumed, that where all orders of the rich are vying with each other to make a splendid appearance, even above their rank and means of support, the spirit of the times, among these orders at least, is favourable to the increase of court influence, and therefore to the spirit of despotism.

This rivalry in splendour is, in course, attended with great expense; an expense, which by reducing independent fortunes, diminishes independence of spirit. They who are ruined in seconding the purposes of a court, naturally think themselves entitled to indemnity from court favour. They become then, merely tools of the minister, and dare not speak or act, in any instance, against him, lest they renounce all hope of the glittering prize, the secret douceur, the share of the loan, the contract, the place, the pension, the provision for a son, a nephew, a cousin, or the clerical tutor of the family, who has perhaps grown grey in hungry hope, fed only by the meagre diet of a ministerial promise.

Thus the rage of outshining others in externals contributes to ruin both fortune and principle. Add to this, that the prevalence of pageantry erects, in society, a false standard of human excellence. Money becomes the deity. Money is to give consequence, consideration, power. Money engrosses honour, which is due, and has often been paid, to poverty, when adorned with art, virtue, knowledge, or any other kind of personal merit. The man becomes

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nothing, and money all. How must the human mind sink in such a conjuncture! Its noblest energies cannot give it that estimation with mankind, which money, inherited by a fool, or acquired by a knave, boldly claims and obtains. Then what encouragement to young men to pursue improvement with any singular ardour? Common attainments are perhaps the best adapted to facilitate the acquisition of money. Common attainments and superficial ornaments will form the whole of education. In the mean time, mind is neglected, and human nature degenerates. Then steps in the despot. For the consequence, take the map, and look over the countries which formed ancient Greece.

The pageantry of life, considered in a political view, as designed by the grandees to awe the people, and keep them out of the park of selfish happiness, which the grandees have fenced with high pales, and guarded with spring-guns and man-traps, certainly may lay claim to the praise of deep cunning or worldly wisdom. The pageantry of life may answer the purpose of the scenery of the play-house, and keep the vulgar from beholding the grandees of the world, before they are dressed and made up for public exhibition. The galleries would certainly lose much of their veneration for the theatrical kings, queens, and nobles, if they were to see them behind the scenes, unbedizened. The pageantry of life is therefore highly efficacious in deluding the vulgar. When not carried too far, and abused for the purposes of oppression, it undoubtedly has its use. But is it, in general, conducive to the happiness of man; either of those who are the actors in the pageant, and gratify their pride by attracting the eyes of beholders; or of those who are led by it to a foolish admiration and a tame acquiescence?

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Chains of gold and silver are no less galling than fetters of iron.

Pageantry has contributed perhaps more than any other cause to the prevalence of war, the bane of happiness, the disgrace of human nature. The grand operations of war, the splendour of arms, the finery of military dress, have been the amusements which despots have chiefly delighted in, whenever they could behold them in perfect consistence with their own personal safety. The pageantry of war dazzles young minds, and supplies both armies and navies with willing victims. The ugliness of slaughter, the desolation of fertile plains, the burning of peaceful villages, have all been unnoticed, amid the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war. The taste for false glare and deceitful appearances of happiness and glory, has then been one of the most prolific parents of human calamity. It has palliated robbery, and covered foul murder with a glittering veil of tinsel.

All imposture is ultimately productive of evil. Pageantry, in a wretched world like this, assumed by infirm mortals doomed shortly to die, cannot but be deceitful. Its object is to put off false and counterfeit goods for true. There is nothing in human affairs that will justify or support that glare of happiness which the pageantry of the rich and great wish to display. The mask is too small and too transparent to conceal the face of woe, the wrinkles of decay and imperfection. In times of great ignorance, when scarcely any could read, and very little communication was preserved among the different orders of society, the mummery of courts and courtiers taught the vulgar to believe that the internal organization of beings, so decorated externally, must be of a superior nature. Princes and priests dressed

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themselves in grotesque garbs, in a kind of masquerade habit, to carry on the delusion. But the reign of great wigs, fur gowns, hoods, and cloaks, is nearly at its close. Gilded coaches, horses richly caparisoned, gaudy hammer-cloths, fine footmen, endeavour to supply their place; but they have lost much of their influence; and at last it will be found, that to obtain the respect of the people, it will be necessary to deserve it. No longer will the public admire the poor creature who rides within the coach, for a splendour which he owes entirely to the manufacturer of carriages, the painter, the carver, the gilder, the harness-maker, the horse-dealer, and the groom. No longer will men unjustly transfer the praise due to the tailor and hair-dresser, to the proud beau, who struts as if the earth were not good enough to tread upon, nor the people whom he meets, to look at as he passes them.

The pageantry exhibited by contractors, by placemen, by pensioners, by commissaries, by all who fatten on the public spoils, may justly be considered as an insult on the people. In times of great prosperity it might be winked at; but in times of distress and adversity, it is offensive. It answers no good end. It merely gratifies the vanity of those who make the display. The ostentation of the unfeeling great in France aggravated the sense of suffering under its despotism; but, on the other hand, in provoking the people by the insult, it accelerated and completed the revolution.

It is probable that every little wretch who decorates himself, and all that belongs to him, with finery to the utmost of his power, would be a despot, if he could, and dared. He shows all the dispositions to assume superiority without merit. He certainly has a narrow and vain mind. He cannot be a



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philosopher or philanthropist. With all his style and splendour in eating, drinking, dwelling, dressing, and riding, we cannot admire him; then let us pity, or deride.

Mere folly might be laughed at and neglected; but the folly I describe is mischievous. It delights in oppression and war; and is one of the principal promoters of the despotic spirit.

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## SECTION XXIV.

*Insolence of the higher Orders to the Middle Ranks and the Poor; with their affected Condescension, in certain Circumstances, to the lowest of the People.*

Public corruption must produce private. When pride is a ruling principle in the conduct of state affairs, it must display itself in every part of domestic life, accompanying its lordly possessor from the palace at St. James's and the levee in Downing-street, to the rural mansion in the distant county, to the convivial table, to the fire-side, to the stable, and to the dog-kennel.

A due degree of self-respect, a dignified behaviour, a demand of what is due to oneself, attended with a cheerful payment of what is due to others, are highly laudable, and have no connection with that senseless, sullen, cruel pride, which marks the spirit of despotism.

This latter sort of pride is totally destitute of feeling for others. It scarcely acknowledges the common tie of humanity. It stands alone, completely insulated from all human beings below it, and connected only by a narrow isthmus with those above it. It seems to think the world, and all that it contains,

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created for its own exclusive gratification. The men and women in it are merely instruments subservient to the will and pleasure of aristocratic insolence.

With this idea of its own privileges and claims, it is no wonder that it shows symptoms of extreme soreness and excessive irritation on the least opposition to its will and pleasure. Accordingly those of the human race, whose unhappy lot it is to be domestic or menial servants to persons of either sex who swell with the selfish pride of aristocracy, are kept in a state of abject servility, compelled to watch the looks and motions of the demigod or demigoddess, and spoken to with a severity of language seldom used to the horses in the stable, or the dogs in the kennel. No attendance by night or by day can be sufficient. Such superior beings cannot perform the most ordinary operations of nature without assistance, which degrades both the giver and receiver. They cannot put on their own clothes; but like eastern tyrants surrounded by slaves, stretch themselves on the couch of indolence, while their fellow-creatures, equals by nature, with trembling solicitude fasten a button, or tie a shoe-string. The slightest error, delay, or accident, draws down imprecations on the head of the offender, more terrible than the anathemas of a pope.

If the little Mogul affect spirit, then he talks, in his ire, of horsewhips, kicking down stairs, breaking every bone in the skin of the wretched operator, who, as human nature is prone to error, may have deviated, in adjusting a curl, from the standard of court propriety. When he has occasion to speak of one of his servants, he commonly says, "one of my rascals did this or that;" and when he speaks to them, especially on the slightest neglect or mistake, his choler breaks out into oaths, curses, and epithets,



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expressive of bitterness and venom, for which language has not yet found adequate terms. The genius of Homer, which described the wrath of Achilles, can alone paint in colour black enough the atrocity of the great man's ire. If it were not for that vulgar thing law, which, on such occasions, makes no distinctions, the great man would trample the little man, who has buckled his shoe awry, out of existence.

To maintain that accuracy of dress and splendour of appearance, which so superior a being thinks absolutely necessary, certain vulgar people, called tradesmen, must inevitably be employed; and in this country of plebeian liberty, they will no more work for a nabob, or a rich contractor, or a peer of the realm, without payment, than for a French sans culotte. But woe betide them, if they have the insufferable insolence to present their bills uncalled, though their families are starving, and their landlords are ejecting them from their habitations. "The insolence of the rascals!" exclaims the great man, "let them wait, let them call again, and think themselves well off if I do not chastise them with a horse-whip, or kick them down stairs, for knocking at my door, and bringing bills without order. But, d'ye hear: pay the scoundrels this time, and mind, I never deal with them any more!" Then follows a volley of oaths and curses on the heads of all such blackguards, low-lived wretches, scum of the earth, thieves, and pickpockets, that do not know how to keep their distance, and treat a gentleman with due respect. "Aye," (he adds,) "there we see 'the spirit of the times,' the effect of these cursed doctrines, which those miscreants,* the philosophers,

* An expression of a Member of the House of Lords, when speaking of modern philosophers.

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have broached, to the destruction of all law, order, and religion, throughout Europe."

The middle rank of people, who reside in his vicinity, he takes no more notice of, than if they lived at the arctic or antarctic pole. He keeps them at a distance, because, though not so rich as himself, yet claiming and supporting the rank of gentlemen, they would be likely to approach too near, and perhaps presume upon something of an equality, not only by nature, but by self-esteem and institution. He passes his next-door neighbours in his carriage or on horseback, in his daily rides, without condescending to turn his eyes upon them. He does not recollect even their names. They may be very good sort of people, for any thing he knows to the contrary; but really he has not the honour of knowing them. A despot will not bear a rival near his throne; and therefore he cannot bear any who, with inferior fortunes, might happen to equal him in spirit, in sense, in behaviour, and in education. But if there is any body in the neighbourhood very low indeed; so low, as to be removed from all possibility of clashing with his importance, such an one he will make a companion, and show him most marvellous marks of humility and condescension. Indeed, for the sake of obtaining a little popularity, he will notice cottagers and poor children at play, and make extremely free with clowns, jockies, grooms, huntsmen, and all who have any thing to do with dog and horse flesh. But keep your distance, ye little squires, parsons, and professional men, who make saucy pretensions to knowledge or ingenuity. However, he can never be at a loss for company, while he and his equals drive phaetons and four, to dine with each other at fifteen miles distance, and while officers are quartered in the vicinity. He is abjectly

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servile to his superiors; insolent and neglectful to the middle ranks; and free and easy to the humble sons of poverty, who will bear a volley of oaths whenever he thinks proper to discharge them, and who, if spit upon, will not spit again, because they are his workmen, tenants, or toad-eaters.

He who can eradicate such insolence from a neighbourhood, by treating it with the contempt and ridicule which it deserves, certainly contributes to the happiness of society. It is confined in its sphere of action; but it is the same sort of despotism which ravaged Poland, and deluges the earth with human gore. In a free country like this, where law and liberty flourish, it is a vulture in a cage, but still it is a vulture; and the little birds, to whom nature has given the free air to range in, ought to unite in endeavouring to destroy it.

Does any sensible man believe that such persons, if their power were equal to their will, would suffer freeholders of forty shillings a-year, to vote for members of parliament; or juries of twelve honest plebeians to decide in state trials, where ministers are anxious (as they value their places) for a verdict favourable to their administration? They would not permit, if they could help it, the middle ranks to breathe the common air, or feel the genial sun, which God has given to shine indiscriminately on the palace and the cottage. They are as much enemies to kings as to the people, because they would, if possible, be kings themselves; but as that is impossible, they crouch, like fawning spaniels, to the hand which has it in its power to throw them a bone.

This description of persons is peculiarly formidable to liberty, because they are insatiably greedy of power. From their order chiefly arise the purchasers of boroughs, in which they traffic on

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speculation, like dealers in hops, determined to re-sell their commodity, as soon as they can, to the best bidder. They are also of that hardened effrontery which pushes its way to public employment, stands forward at court, and, on all occasions, assumes that importance, which, from the general diffidence of the better part of mankind, is but too easily conceded to the most impudent pretensions. In consequence of this unblushing assurance, this arrogant, audacious presumption, this hardened temper, which can bear repulse without being abashed or dispirited, they oftenest rise to the highest posts; and such as would be posts of honour, if they were not filled by men who have not one quality of a beneficent nature, or which deserves the esteem of their fellow-creatures. But though they have no inclination to do good; they acquire the power, which they fail not to exercise, of doing much evil. They encourage arbitrary principles. They depreciate the people on all occasions; and add weight and confidence to the aristocratical confederacy. They may sometimes be men of parts. They are seldom deficient in the graces of Lord Chesterfield. But they are hard-hearted, selfish wretches, attached to the childish vanity of the world, and preferring a title or a riband to the peace, the lives, the property, and the liberty of their fellow-mortals; all which they are ready to sacrifice, even for the chance of pleasing a prime minister, and obtaining some bauble, which reason must ever despise, when it is not the badge of experienced virtues. "One of these," (says an old writer,)*

* Samuel Johnson; not the lexicographer, whose religion was often popish superstition, and whose loyalty the most irrational toryism. I venerate his abilities and his private virtues; but detest his politics. He would have displaced the Brunswick family for the Stuarts, if his power had kept pace with his inclinations.

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"values being called his grace, or noble marquis," (unideal names as they are,) "more than a million of lives, provided that in such a general destruction he can save one; and to confirm themselves in their ill-gotten honours, they generally hatch plots, suborn rebellions, or any thing that they think can create business, keep themselves from being questioned, and thin mankind, whereby they lose so many of their enemies."

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## SECTION XXV.

*Of a Natural Aristocracy.*

Nobility, according to the idea of the vulgar, both in high and low life, is nothing more than riches that have been a long time in one family: but it often happens that riches have been originally gained and preserved in one family by sordid avarice, by mean and dishonest arts; such arts as are utterly incompatible with true nobility, with superiority of intellects, united with generosity of disposition.

Most of the titles of nobility, and other civil distinctions, were taken from war: as a marquis, a duke, a count, a baron, a landgrave, a knight, an esquire. The inventors of arts, the improvers of life, those who have mitigated evil and augmented the good allotted to men in this world, were not thought worthy of any titular distinctions. The reason is indeed sufficiently obvious: titles were originally bestowed by despotic kings, who required and rewarded no other merit but that which supported them by violence in their arbitrary rule. In some countries they are now given, for the same reasons, to those who effect the same purposes, not by war only, but by corruption.

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Persons thus raised to civil honours, thus enriched by the long-continued favour of courts, would willingly depreciate all dignity which is derived from God and virtue only, unindebted to patents royal. They would create an artificial preference to a distinguished few among the human race, which nature is for ever counteracting, by giving superior abilities to those who are pushed down among the despised and neglected many. This conduct is both unjust and unnatural. It cannot be favourable to human happiness, because it is adverse to truth, and does violence to the will of God manifested in the operations of nature. In France it was carried to that extreme which brought it to its termination. There is a tendency to carry it to extremes in all countries where courts predominate. The friend of reason and of man will therefore endeavour to convince the people, that an aristocracy, founded on caprice or accident only, without any regard to superior abilities and virtues, is a fertile cause of war, and all those evils which infest a great part of civil society.

That the best and ablest men should govern the worst and weakest, is reasonable: and this is the aristocracy appointed by God and nature. But what do we mean when we say the best and ablest men? Do we mean men of the best families; that is, men in whose families riches and titles have long been conspicuous? By the ablest men, do we mean men who possess the greatest power, by undue influence, in borough and county elections, though the exertion of that power be strictly forbidden by the law and constitution? Or do we mean men of honest, upright, and benevolent hearts; of vigorous, well-informed, well-exercised understandings? Certainly the latter sort, which forms the aristocracy established by God and nature. This is gold; the king's head stamped

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upon it may make it a guinea. The other is only copper; and though the same impression may be made upon it at the mint, it is intrinsically worth no more than a halfpenny.

But Mr. Burke has favoured mankind with a description of what he calls a true natural aristocracy.

The first requisite,* according to him, is "To be bred in a place of estimation." Mr. Burke is a good classical scholar, and often writes Latin in English.† Place here is the Latin *locus*, which every polite scholar has observed to signify family. If I were to translate this little sentence into Latin, I might venture to render it in this manner: *honesto oportet oriundus sit loco*—you must, as the common people would express it, be a gentleman born. The accident of birth therefore is placed at the head of the qualifications necessary to give a man preeminence in society. This doctrine is certainly consistent with the whole tenour of the book; but whether it contributes to the general happiness of mankind, or tends to the spirit of despotism, let impartial observers determine. Mr. Burke had said a few lines before, *satis est equitem mihi plaudere*—"It is enough for me that gentlemen or nobles approve my doctrine;" and there is therefore little doubt but that he is satisfied; for their approbation must be secured by opinions so favourable to their importance in society, independently of laborious, virtuous, and useful exertion.

The next requisite is, "to see nothing low or sordid from one's infancy;" that is, to be kept at a distance from the swinish multitude, so as not to

* See Appeal from the new to the old Whigs, page 128.

† Thus he uses the word *vast*, which the common reader understands very great, in its classical sense, for desolate. Many other instances might be given.

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know those wants which it is the business of superiors, or of a natural aristocracy, to supply or alleviate.

The third requisite is, "to be taught to respect oneself." This seldom requires any great teaching among persons who have the two preceding requisites. Pride and selfishness are the very principles of despotism.

The fourth requisite to natural aristocracy, "is to be habituated to the censorial inspection of the public eye." Yes; so habituated as to be hardened by effrontery, and to say that a king holds his crown* in contempt of the people; and, satis est equitem mihi plaudere, which may be rendered, paraphrastically, "I care nothing for the people's censorial eye or tongue, if the great honour me with their applause, for defending their exclusive privileges from being trodden under the hoof of the swinish multitude."

I pass over some very proper requisites, to proceed to the last. The last is, "to be among rich traders, who, from their success, are presumed to have sharp and vigorous understandings, and to possess the virtues of diligence, order, constancy, and regularity, and to have cultivated an habitual regard to commutative justice.—These are the circumstances of men who form what I should call a natural aristocracy, without which there is no nation. Without this," (the writer intimates, in a few subsequent lines,) "he cannot recognise the existence of the people."

Respecting Mr. Burke greatly, as I do, and agreeing with him in many particulars in this very passage, I cannot help thinking that he has laid too much stress on riches and birth, in pointing out the men intended by nature to take the lead in all human

* Mr. Burke's doctrine.

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affairs, and to form what he calls a true natural aristocracy.

> Nam genus et proavos et quæ non fecimus ipsi
> Vix ea nostra voco.

I think it injurious to society and mankind at large to lavish honours and confer power on accidental qualities, which may exist in their greatest degree and perfection without the least particle of personal merit, without wisdom or benevolence. It discourages industry. It stifles all virtuous emulation. It makes riches the grand object of pursuit; not for their own intrinsic value, not for their power of supplying necessaries, and even luxuries, but for the political consequence they bestow, independently of the mode of acquisition or expenditure. I would have no idolatry. God has shown his peculiar indignation against it. I would not worship a calf, though a golden one. Kings log, and gods made of stocks and stones, can only command reverence from men really sunk to a state below the swine.

I know Lord Bolingbroke's doctrines of liberty are disliked by those who see their own consequence increasing in the increasing spirit of despotism. But I will cite a passage from him, which may counterbalance the servile ideas which some men entertain of the aristocracy constituted by nature.

"It seems to me," says he, "that in order to maintain the moral system of the world at a certain point, far below that of ideal perfection; but however sufficient upon the whole to constitute a state easy and happy, or, at the worst, tolerable; I say, it seems to me, that the Author of Nature has thought fit to mingle, from time to time, among the societies of men, a few, and but a few, of those, on whom he is graciously pleased to bestow a larger portion of

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the ætherial spirit, than is given, in the ordinary course of his providence to the sons of men.***

"You will find that there are superior spirits, men who show, even from their infancy, though it be not always perceived by others, perhaps not felt by themselves, that they were born for something more and better. These are the men to whom the part I mentioned is assigned. Their talents denote their general designation.

"I have sometimes represented to myself the vulgar, who are accidentally distinguished by the titles of king and subject, of lord and vassal, of nobleman and peasant; and the few who are distinguished by nature so essentially from the herd of mankind, that (figure apart) they seem to be of another species. The former loiter or trifle away their whole time; and their presence or their absence would be equally unperceived, if caprice or accident did not raise them often to stations, wherein their stupidity, and their vices, make them a public misfortune. The latter come into the world, or at least continue in it, after the effects of surprise and inexperience are over, like men who are sent on more important errands. They may indulge themselves in pleasure; but as their industry is not employed about trifles, so their amusements are not made the business of their lives. Such men cannot pass unperceived through a country. If they retire from the world, their splendour accompanies them, and enlightens even the obscurity of their retreat. If they take a part in public life, the effect is never indifferent. They either appear like ministers of divine vengeance; and their course through the world is marked by desolation and oppression, by poverty and servitude; or they are the guardian angels of the country they inhabit, busy to avert even the most

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distant evil, and to maintain or procure peace, plenty, and the greatest of human blessings, liberty."

Such men, when they take the latter course, and become the guardian angels of the country they inhabit, are the aristocracy appointed by God and nature. Such men, therefore, should be selected by kings for civil honours, and public functions of high importance. If kings were republicans in the proper sense, all the people would be royalists. But when brilliant honours and ministerial employments are bestowed on fools and knaves, because they were begotten by ancestors whom they disgrace, or possess riches which they abuse, government becomes a nuisance, and the people feel an aristocracy to be little better than an automaton machine, for promoting the purposes of royal or ministerial despotism.

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## SECTION XXVI.

*The excessive Love of Distinction and Power which prevails wherever the Spirit of Despotism exists, deadens some of the finest Feelings of the Heart, and counteracts the Laws of Nature.*

In a system of manners, which renders the possession of riches more honourable than the possession of virtue, which attaches a degree of merit to hereditary rank and nominal distinctions, above all that personal exertions can possibly acquire, the natural ideas of right and wrong are confounded; and man, becomes a depraved, artificial animal, pursues preeminence in society, by counteracting nature, as well as by violating justice.

That he counteracts nature, under such a system, will be evident, on considering the present state of conjugal union among those who appear to place the

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chief good of man in riches, splendour, title, power, and courtly distinctions. Love is every day sacrificed, by the loveliest of the species, on the altar of pride.

The fine sensibilities of the heart, if suffered to influence the choice of a companion for life, might lead to family degradation. "Nature then, avaunt," (exclaims Aristocracy.) "Love is a vulgar passion. The simplest damsel, that slumbers under the roof of straw, feels it in all its ardour. Daughter, you have nobler objects than mere nature presents. Remember your birth. You must make an alliance which may aggrandize the family, which may add title to our riches, or new brilliancy to our title."

In vain have the Loves and the Graces moulded her shape and face with the nicest symmetry. In vain has art added her finest polish to the work of nature. Poor Iphigenia must be sacrificed. Her heart, peradventure, has chosen its mate, and happy would she be, if she could renounce all the embarrassments of high fortune, and emulate the turtle-dove of the vale. But no; she must not tell her love. Perhaps the object of it is only a commoner; perhaps he is only a younger brother; perhaps he has little to recommend him but youth, sense, honour, and virtue. He cannot keep her an equipage. He has no mansion-house. Yet her heart inclines to him, and both God and nature approve her choice; but neither her heart, nor God, nor nature, will be heard, when pride and aristocratical insolence lift up their imperious voice, and command her to remember her rank, and keep up the family dignity.

Lord ***** is introduced as a suitor, under the father's authority. Lord ***** influences five or six boroughs, and the junction of such an interest

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with that of the family must, in all human probability, secure a riband, and perhaps a marquisate.

His lordship is twenty years older than poor Iphigenia. His life has been spent, from infancy, in the midst of luxuries and pleasures, to speak of it in the softest terms. He has a lively juvenile pertness about him; but his person has all the marks of a broken constitution.

Behold, then, the suitor, alighting from a high phaeton, beautifully adorned with coats of arms, not only on the sides and back, but on the lining, drawn by four cream-coloured ponies, and followed by two fine figures of men in white liveries, with horses richly caparisoned, and displaying, in every part, where it is possible, coronets of silver.

Iphigenia appears delighted at the honour of his proposal, though her heart, when she reclines on her pillow, feels a pang of regret which no language can describe. The struggle between love and pride is violent; but it passes in secret. She hears of nothing among her companions, but of the great alliance she is going to make with an ancient and illustrious family. Splendid mansions, glittering carriages, birth-day dresses, flit before her imagination. Above all, the delightful idea that she shall take precedence of those who now think themselves her equals and superiors, dispels every thought of love. As to the man, the husband, he is scarcely considered at all, or he must be considered with disgust. But his title, his house in town, his mansions and parks in the country, his parliamentary interest, the favour in which he stands at court, the brilliant appearance he makes in the realms of fashion; these, added to a father's influence, determine Iphigenia at once to forget the object of her love, and give her hand to deformity, disease, and folly. She marries: the

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family estates and influence are united, and the battered, worn-out bridegroom becomes, in time, a marquis.

The puny offspring of such connubial alliances are trained in the same idolatrous veneration of rank, title, and grandeur; and woman, formed to love and be beloved, sacrifices her happiness to family pride, and lives and dies a legal prostitute, without once tasting the exquisite and natural delight of virtuous, equal, and sincere affection.—Taught from the cradle to believe herself a superior being, she is cheated of the happiness which falls to the lot of those who view their fellow-creatures as one great family, and are not too proud to partake of the common banquet of life, and to choose a partner like the turtle of the vale.

Now mark the consequence. In no rank of society is conjugal happiness more rarely found than among those who have imbibed most copiously the aristocratical principles of selfish pride. The present age abounds with public and notorious instances of infelicity of this sort in the highest ranks of society. It would be painful to dwell upon them. I drop a tear of pity on the lovely victims to despotism, and let the curtain fall.

But surely that degree of pride, nursed by ill-constructed systems of society, which leads to the violation of the first law of nature, and produces misery of the severest kind, ought to be disgraced and reprobated by all who have hearts sufficiently tender to sympathize with the sufferings of their fellow-mortals. Love, and the natural affections between human creatures, are the sweet ingredients which Providence has thrown into the cup of life, to sweeten the bitter beverage. And that state of society, which divests man of his nature, which renders him a factitious creature, which hardens



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his heart with selfishness, and swells him with the morbid tumours of vanity, deserves execration. It increases all the natural misery of man, and withholds the anodyne.

Something may be said in excuse for the more amiable part of the species, when they discard love from their bosoms to indulge pride. Their haughty fathers too often inculcate the lesson of pride from the earliest infancy; and teach them to think nothing really beautiful and lovely, which is not marked by fashion, or varnished by titles, riches, and heraldic honours. The men in general set them the example. They lavish their love on the courtesan, and follow prudence in the choice of a wife; that is, they seek not a heart that beats in unison with their own, but a legal connection which increases their fortune, or aggrandizes their situation. A marriage of love, at an age when the heart is most prone to it, is considered as a folly and a misfortune, unless it advances the man in society. The women learn to retaliate, and to give their hands without their hearts; gratifying pride at the expense of love.

When truth, justice, reason, and nature are little regarded, in competition with the desire of distinction, which is the case wherever the spirit of despotism has insinuated itself, all true and solid happiness will be sacrificed for the appearance of superiority in birth, in possessions, in houses and carriages, and above all, in court favour. The tenderest ties of consanguinity, affinity, and friendship, snap asunder when opposed to the force of any thing which is likely to contribute to personal splendour or family pride, political consequence, influence at elections, and finally, to the honours conferred by royalty. The little aspirants to subordinate degrees of despotism, are continually crawling up the hill,

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ever looking at the brilliant object on the summit, and leaving below, all that love and nature teach them to embrace.

From this principle, unnatural as it is, arises the anxious desire of aristocratical bigots to make, as they express it, an eldest son; to starve, or at least to distress a dozen sons and daughters, in order to leave behind them one great representative, who may continue to toil in the pursuit of civil preeminence, for the gratification of family pride. The privileges of primogeniture tend to establish a class of individuals all over the land, who are interested, and sufficiently inclined, from pride as well as interest, to promote the spirit of despotism. They would have no objection to the feudal system, in which the only distinction was that of lords and vassals. Not contented with engrossing the property which ought to be shared among their brothers and sisters, they claim privileges in consequence of their property, and, in proportion to their acres assume a lead in their counties, which ought only to be conceded to integrity united with talent.

When the laws of nature, and eternal truth and justice, are violated, no wonder that despotism advances, and man is degraded.

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## SECTION XXVII.

*On the Opinion that the People are annihilated or absorbed in Parliament; that the Voice of the People is no where to be heard but in Parliament; and on similar Doctrines, tending to depreciate the People.*

There is no doctrine so absurd but pride and selfishness will adopt and maintain it with obstinacy, if it be conducive to their gratification. Alexander, it is



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said, really believed himself a god. The vilest of the Cæsars demanded divine honours. Many instances are on record of wretched beings, with hardly any thing worthy of man about them, forgetting, in consequence of a little elevation above others, that they were mortals; behaving with the wickedness and cruelty of devils, and at the same time arrogating the power and dignity of the celestial nature. It is related of Hanno, the Carthaginian, that he taught starlings to say "Deus Hanno;"* and that when a very large number had learned their lesson, he turned them loose into the woods, hoping that they would teach the wild birds on the trees to repeat the same words, and that thus the divinity of Hanno might be wafted into the remotest regions, and become the worship of the universe. Such conduct appears to resemble the ravings of the poor lunatic, who crowns himself, as he sits in his desolate cell, with a crown of straw, and imagines, while he sways a sceptre of the same materials, that he is an emperor. But in truth, the pride of despots, I mean those who have all the dispositions of despots, though they may not have the diadems, displays many of the symptoms of downright lunacy. Pride is allowed by the physicians to have a powerful effect in turning the brain; and though it may not always fit the unhappy sufferer for Bedlam, yet commonly renders him unfit for the offices of social life.

Shocking as madness is, it sometimes behaves in a manner which turns pity into laughter. Can any thing be more ridiculous, than the insolence of some persons, who having adopted high aristocratical notions, to correspond with their high birth, high titles, and high rank, declare that they know not what is meant by the people out of parliament; that

* Hanno is a God.

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they do not acknowledge the political existence of the people, but on the benches of St. Stephen's chapel? Individuals of low degree they may know, and employ in their service, but they know nothing of the people, as millions of men, possessing rights or power. "The constitution" (say they) "knows nothing of the people considered as individuals." King, lords, and commons constitute the nation; but what is meant by the people they cannot divine. A mob they know, and would always have them dispersed by the military, as soon as two or three are gathered together; but the people, as a part of the constitution, they never could discover.

Mr. Burke, the great Coryphæus of aristocracy, says, "As a people can have no right to a corporate capacity without universal consent, so neither have they a right to hold exclusively any lands in the name and title of a corporation. On the scheme of the present rulers in our neighbouring country, regenerated as they are, they have no more right to the territory called France than I (Edmund Burke) have. Who are these insolent men, calling themselves the French nation, that would monopolize this fair domain of nature? Is it because they speak a certain jargon? Is it their mode of chattering? The crowd of men on the other side of the Channel, who have the impudence to call themselves a people, can never be the lawful exclusive possessors of the soil." How truly laughable to hear an individual, Mr. Edmund Burke, taxing twenty-six millions of human creatures with impudence, for presuming to call themselves a people! I must smile at such absurdity, while I sincerely lament that this ingenious man has missed the opportunity of raising his family to the peerage, the grand object of so many years indefatigable labour, by a loss never to be repaired, and

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in which every feeling heart must sympathize. Ambition, what art thou to the feelings of a father, exclaiming, like David, "O Absalom, my son, my son!" The great teacher death shows the vanity of all human aspirations after sublunary glory. He who loses a son in the prime of life and the career of honour, may learn to weep over the thousands, whose dearest relatives have been cut off by the sword of war, in consequence of doctrines which he maintained by a gaudy display of his eloquence, without foreseeing or regarding the calamities they had a tendency to produce.

The subtle writer goes on and observes, that "When the multitude" (from the context he means a majority of the people) are not under the habitual social discipline of the wiser, more expert, and more opulent, they can scarcely be said to be in civil society. . . .When you separate the common sort of men from their proper chieftains, so as to form them into an adverse army, I no longer know that venerable object called the people, in such a disbanded race of deserters and vagabonds. For awhile they may be terrible indeed; but in such a manner as wild beasts are terrible. The mind owes to them no sort of submission. They are, as they have always been reputed, rebels. They may lawfully be fought with and brought under, whenever an advantage offers."

What gave rise to these elucidations he has told us a few pages before. "The factions now so busy amongst us, in order to divest men of all love of their country, and to remove from their minds all duty with regard to the state, endeavour to propagate an opinion that the people, in forming their commonwealth, have by no means parted with their power over it!" Horrendum dictu!

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"Discuss any of their schemes—their answer is—it is the act of the people, and that is sufficient!—The people are masters of the commonwealth; because in substance they are the commonwealth! The French revolution, say they, was the act of the majority of the people; and if the majority of any other people, the people of England for instance, wish to make the same change, they have the same right.—Just the same, undoubtedly. That is, none at all."

Such is the doctrine of this warm partisan of aristocratical distinction. But what say seven or eight millions of good people, who wish nothing, in their interference in politics, but to secure and extend their own happiness, and to make all others happy within the sphere of their influence? Let them say what they please, their remonstrance must not be heard. They are political non-entities; they are, as pride commonly calls inferiors in private life, nobody, or people whom nobody knows.

But now comes the tax-gatherer. These non-entities must find real tangible money to pay for the salaries of places, to pay pensions, and the interest of money advanced for the waging of wars, said to be in defence of law, order, and religion. It will not do to plead that they have no political existence. A very considerable part of their property, the produce of their labour, must be annually paid for the support of those who have the effrontery to say they are not visible, as a majority of individuals, in the eye of the constitution.

At a general election, would any candidate for a considerable city or county dare to advance such opinions respecting the insignificance, or rather non-existence, of the people, as have been advanced by borough members, in their zeal for power and prerogative? The people would deny the doctrine

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with a voice loud enough to silence the most obstreperous declaimer.

Mr. Burke will make no new converts to this opinion. The tory party had adopted it previously to the instruction of their sanguine advocate. It was always one of their principles. The people themselves will certainly reprobate ideas which lead to their political annihilation, in every respect, but in the privilege of contributing to the public revenue. But one cannot be surprised at any wild assertions of a man who writes under the impulse of passion. Anger, inflamed by mortified pride, seems to animate almost every sentence of his late invective. And what are we to think of the whiggism of one, who, in the commencement of the alarm concerning French principles, is said to have proposed to Mr. Fox to join together (these are the very words of the proposal) in "frowning down the doctrines of liberty."* The proposer must have no small opinion of himself, when he imagined that, assisted by one more, (though he were as great a man as Fox) he could frown down the doctrines of liberty. Jupiter shook Olympus with a nod; and Burke was to discountenance liberty, and annihilate the political existence of a people, with a frown.

Divisum imperium cum Jove Burkus habet.

I revere the private virtues of the man. I feel and admire his excellence as a writer. I deplore the mistake which has led him to gratify the few in power, at the expense of millions of his fellow-creatures, who would have rejoiced in such an advocate against the influence of the despotic spirit. Imperial power has means enough to maintain itself. Genius

* See Mr. Wyvill's Letter to Mr. Pitt, page 108.

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should ever espouse the cause of liberty, and of those who have no standing armies, no treasury, no tribe of dependents, nothing to stand their friend, but a good cause, which, in a corrupt state of society, is too often defeated by a bad one.

May the people, in all climates which the sun views in his daily progress, prove their political existence by their public virtue! May despots learn to fear the power of those whose happiness they have dared to destroy. In our own country, we have a king who rules in the hearts of his people, and who would therefore be the first to reject the doctrines of Mr. Burke, which tend to sink the people, as a majority of individuals, into a state of insignificance. May the people claim and preserve their rights, in defiance of all over-ruling influence, and all sophistical declamation. But let them pursue their philanthropic ends with steady coolness. Let them respect themselves, and act consistently with their dignity. Let not a single drop of blood be shed, nor a single mite of property unjustly seized, in correcting abuses, and recovering rights. Let them pass a glorious act of amnesty, and generously forgive their enemies; proving to an admiring world, that a great people can be gentle and merciful to frail, erring individuals, while it explodes their errors, and calmly evinces, by virtuous energies, its own political existence and supreme authority.

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## SECTION XXVIII.

*The fashionable Contempt thrown on Mr. Locke, and his Writings in Favour of Liberty; and on other Authors and Books espousing the same Cause.*

It is an infallible proof of great abilities in a writer who espouses the cause of the people, when he is

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cavilled at, written against, and condemned by the persons whose despotic principles he has endeavoured to expose and refute. It is a sign that he has touched them to the quick, and left a sore place, the smart of which is continually urging them to murmur. Their affected derision and contempt of him are but transparent veils to hide the writhings of their tortured minds; an awkward mask to cover the ugly features of impotent revenge, struggling, through pride, to conceal the painful emotions of rage.

It is amusing to observe what mean and little arts are used by these angry persons to lower the character of any writer, whose arguments they cannot refute. They hire a venal tool to write his life, and crowd it with every falsehood and calumny which party malice can invent, and popular credulity disseminate. They relate, without examination into a single fact, and decide, without the smallest attention to candour or justice. The man is to be hunted down. The minister and his creatures cry, havoc, and let slip the vermin of corruption. The newspapers, in daily paragraphs, discharge the venom of abuse on his name. Venal critics pour their acrimonious censure, in general terms, on his compositions, which they could not equal, and dare not examine with impartiality. Nick-names are fastened on him; and whenever he is spoken of, all additions of respect are omitted, and, in their place, some familiar and vulgar abbreviation of his christian name is used to vilify his surname. Poor artifices indeed! for while they expose the malice and weakness of those who use them, they leave the arguments and doctrines of the writer rather confirmed than shaken by an attack so feeble.

It is not surprising, indeed, that contemporary

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writers in favour of the people, whatever their abilities, and however convincing their arguments, are treated with affected contempt, as often as they excite real admiration. Envy always strikes at living merit. The policy of the aspirants to arbitrary power unites with envy, to depress all who are rising to public esteem by personal exertion, by their own virtue, independently of court patronage and hereditary distinction. But it might be supposed that departed genius, elevated, by the conspiring voice of nations, to the highest rank, would be surrounded with a sanctity which would defend it from profanation. It is not so. The love of power, in the hearts of mean and selfish men, acknowledges no reverence for genius. It has no reverential feelings beyond the purlieus of a court. The false brilliancy of what is called high and fashionable life, is preferred by it to the permanent lustre of all solid personal virtue.

Mr. Locke, therefore, one of the chief glories of English literature, is to be depreciated, for he wrote on the side of liberty. Possessing reason in greater perfection than most men, he naturally inclined to espouse the cause of man, without confining his regard to those who boasted adventitious honours, the fantastic distinctions of birth, or the fortuitous advantages of fortune. These are few, compared with the millions who constitute the mass of a commonwealth. His understanding, greatly elevated above the ordinary standard, clearly saw, that the purposes of real philanthropy can be accomplished solely by improving the condition of the many. They must be taught to know and value their rights. They must learn to reverence themselves, by feeling their importance in society. Such an improvement of their minds will lead them to act consistently with their dignity as rational creatures, and as members of a

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community which they love, and the welfare of which they find to depend upon their own virtue.

Mr. Locke was certainly stimulated to write his book on government by these philosophical and philanthropic ideas. In pursuance of those ideas, he wished to support, by doctrines favourable to general liberty, the revolution. Let us attend to his own words in his Preface.

"These papers," says he, "I hope, are sufficient to establish the throne of our great Restorer, our present King William; to make good his title, in the consent of the people, which being the only one of all lawful governments, he has more fully and clearly than any prince in Christendom; and to justify to the world the people of England, whose love of their just and natural rights, with their resolution to preserve them, saved the nation when it was on the very brink of slavery and ruin."

Mr. Locke's book then tends directly to strengthen the foundation of the throne on which the present royal family is seated. It is equally favourable to the king and the people. Yet because it is at all favourable to the people and the general cause of liberty, it is the fashion, in the aristocratical circles, to revile it. It is said to contain the elements of those doctrines which the philosophers of France have dilated, which gave independence to America, and rendered France a republic. It is said, very unjustly, to contain the seminal principles of Mr. Paine's matured and expanded tree. Mr. Locke, therefore, the great defender of the revolution and of King William, is reprobated by tory courtiers, and numbered, by the aspirants to enormous power and privileges, to which they have no just and natural claim, among the "miscreants, called philosophers."

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Men who undertake to defend any thing contrary to the common sense and common interest of mankind, usually hurt the side they intend to defend, by promoting a discussion, and calling forth common sense, excited by the common interest, to defend its own cause. Thus Sir Robert Filmer's book gave rise both to Sydney's and Locke's defence of liberty. Thus Mr. Burke's Reflections on France drew forth Mr. Paine's Rights of Man, in which is much excellent matter, mingled with a blameable censure of limited monarchy. Thus Salmasius's mercenary invective against the republicans of England in the last century, provoked the great Milton, scarcely less eloquent in prose than in poetry, to defend the right of the people of England to manage, in their own country, their own concerns, according to their own judgment and inclination.

Milton and Locke are great names on the side of liberty. But Milton has been treated contemptuously; and some have shown a spirit illiberal enough to detract from his poetry in revenge for his politics. His last biographer, Dr. Johnson, who had many early prejudices which his most vigorous reason could not to the last subdue, was, by early prejudice, a violent tory and jacobite. I think there is reason to believe, that he would have been easily made a convert to popery. His high-church and high-prerogative principles led him to speak less honourably of Milton than he must have done if he had viewed him through a medium undiscoloured. Milton was a greater man than Johnson; and though I condemn him for his bitter hatred to monarchy and episcopacy, yet, in extenuation, let it be considered how much monarchy and episcopacy had been abused in his time, and how much more friendly to freedom they both are in our happier age. Milton

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discovered a noble spirit of independence, and his writings contain some of the finest passages that ever were written in vindication of civil liberty. They contributed to raise that spirit which afterwards produced our happy revolution; and I have no doubt but that Milton would have rejoiced under a limited monarchy. It is to writings and to a spirit like his, mankind are indebted for the limitation. If honest and able minds, like Milton's, had not appeared on the part of the people, it is probable that no such thing as a limited monarch would have been found on the face of the earth; and the family now on the British throne would have been known only in the petty dynasties of the German empire.

Free spirits are therefore to be pardoned in some errors which the propensity of human nature to err must ever render venial; and the general tendency of their writings to make the mass of mankind free and happy, ought to secure attention to their doctrines, and honour to their names. The enemies to the spirit of despotism have seen, with pain, the attempts to lessen these great men in the eyes of the world extended to writers of less renown, but of more recent date. They have seen men, good men in private life, and philosophers, whose discourses and letters have gained the notice and esteem of every enlightened country, reproached, vilified, persecuted, and almost destroyed, because, in consequence of that fine understanding which had done so much in philosophy, they made some discoveries in politics which must for ever militate powerfully against the spirit of despotism. Voltaire, Rousseau, Raynal, Price, Priestley, Paine, however different their characters, attainments, and abilities, are all vilified together, (because they have written admirably on the side of liberty,) all involved in one

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indiscriminate torrent of obloquy. The partisans of unlimited power would persuade us, not only that they were knaves, but fools. Some of them have very exceptionable passages in their works; but where they treat of civil liberty, they plead the cause of human nature. They have not pleaded it unsuccessfully. Political artifices cannot stifle truth and common sense.

The independent part of mankind, who detest parties and faction, and mean nothing but the happiness of their fellow-creatures, will do well to be upon their guard against the misrepresentations of those who would vilify a Locke, a Milton, a Sydney. Let them read and judge for themselves. The men who are anxious to withhold or extinguish the light, may fairly be suspected of intending to do evil.

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## SECTION XXIX.

*Of the Despotism of Influence; while the Forms of a free Constitution are preserved.*

The words of a great lawyer, instructing the youth of a nation at a celebrated university, must be supposed to be well considered. Blackstone, the grave commentator, after expatiating on the advantages derived from the revolution, proceeds to remark, that "though these provisions have nominally and in appearance reduced the strength of the executive power to a much lower ebb than in the preceding period; yet if, on the other hand, we throw into the opposite scale the vast acquisition of force arising from the riot act, and the annual expedience of a standing army; and the vast acquisition of personal attachment, arising from the magnitude of the

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national debt, and the manner of levying those yearly millions that are appropriated to pay the interest; we shall find that the crown has gradually and imperceptibly gained almost as much influence as it has apparently lost in prerogative."

Blackstone, consistently with the habits of his profession, expressed himself cautiously. He says the crown has gained *almost* as much influence as it has apparently lost in prerogative. There are men of great political judgment who think that it has gained more. The House of Commons has, in an auspicious hour, resolved, and it can never be too often repeated, that the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Influence is more dangerous than prerogative. It is a subtle poison that acts unseen. Prerogative can be resisted, as a robber; but influence is an assassin.

Lord Bolingbroke tells us, that "we have lost the spirit of our constitution; and therefore we bear, from little engrossers of delegated power, what our fathers would not have suffered from true proprietors of the royal authority."

Such suggestions are certainly alarming. They come from high authority, and are abundantly confirmed by recent transactions. The magnitude of the national debt, and the share that almost every family in the kingdom, directly or indirectly, possesses in the public funds, contribute, more than all other causes, to increase the influence of the crown among the mass of the people. But the debt is still increasing, in consequence of war. Property in the funds is still more widely diffused; the influence, in consequence, more extended. Liberty may be more effectually invaded by the influence of the stocks, than it ever was invaded, in the days of the Stuarts, by the abuse of prerogative.

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We are happy in a king, who, making the happiness of the people his first object, certainly would not avail himself of any advantages afforded by circumstances, to intrench upon their liberty. But be it remembered, that ministers in this country, with their favourites, often constitute an oligarchy.

This ministerial oligarchy may certainly abuse the influence of the crown, so as to render itself virtually superior to the limited and constitutional monarchy. Should such ever be the case, the oligarchy will be a species of despotism, the more formidable as the more insidious; possessing the power, but denying the form. By a judicious distribution of favours, by alluring all the rich and great to its side, either by hope or by fear, it may erect a rampart, which the independent part of the people, acting from no system, and disunited, may vainly seek to demolish. The monarch and the people may join hand in hand, without effect, against a ministerial oligarchy, thus buttressed by a faction composed of rank and wealth artfully combined, in the meanest manner, for the basest purposes. False alarms may be spread on the danger of property from the diffusion of new principles, so as to drive all who possess an acre of land, or a hundred pounds in the public funds, within the ministerial pale. Religion may be said to be in danger, in order to bring in the devout and well-disposed. Order may be declared in jeopardy, that the weak, the timid, and the quiet may be led, by their fears, to unite with wealth and power. Plots and conspiracies are common expedients of delusion. They have been used, by profligate ministers, with such a total disregard to truth and probability, that they now begin to lose their effect. But how dreadful, if influence should ever prevail with juries, to gratify the inventors of



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false plots, treasons, and conspiracies, by bringing in verdicts favourable to the views of the villainous fabricators! English juries are indeed still uncorrupted. They are unconnected with courts and ministers. And the uncorrupt part of our system, in cases of state trials, is able to prevent the mischief which would be caused by the corrupt part of it. The honest juries, in the late trials for treason, have not only done honour to our country and to human nature, but added great strength to the cause of truth, justice, and the constitution.

But it is truly alarming, to hear the verdicts of juries obliquely impeached by eminent men in the legislative assemblies. There has appeared no stronger symptom of the spirit of despotism, than the attempts of courtiers and crown lawyers, in the public senate, to vilify juries and their verdicts, given after a more solemn and longer investigation than ever took place on similar trials. Persons acquitted after such an ordeal, have been said to be no more innocent than acquitted felons. That the people have born such an insult on their most valuable privilege, with patience, is a proof that a tame acquiescence has been produced among them, unknown to their virtuous ancestors. It is to be hoped the insult will stimulate future juries to preserve their rights with jealous vigilance, and render them impregnable by ministerial influence, directly or indirectly applied. If the men who disapprove the verdicts of the virtuous juries, on the late occasions, had themselves been the jurors, they would have given different verdicts, pronounced the prisoners guilty, and assigned them over to the resentment of irritated, aristocratic pride. So mighty is the despotism of influence, that neither justice nor mercy can check it in the breast of a proud parasite.

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There is every reason to believe, (and the belief is highly consolatory,) that juries will long continue to preserve their integrity; because they are indiscriminately selected from the middle rank and the mass of the people. Influence cannot reach every individual in the millions that constitute a great nation. But we must remember that influence is increasing; and that its nature is to diffuse deadly poison, without giving alarm. Like the air loaded with infection, it silently and secretly wafts disease into the strongest abodes of health, and penetrates the castle, which is impregnable to the sword of the open invader. Therefore, as influence increases, the jealousy and vigilance of the uninfected part of the community should increase in proportion. Though undue influence may never operate on juries, yet is there no danger lest it should, at some distant period, contaminate the minds of judges and crown lawyers, for whose obsequious interpretations of law may be held up prizes most glittering in the eyes of imagination, and most alluring to avarice and vanity?

But granting that the foul stain of corruption should never spot the white robe of justice; that the religion of an oath should still be revered, and conscience hold the balance with an even hand; yet is there no danger lest the despotism of influence should destroy the vitals of a free constitution, and leave nothing behind but the form, the exuviæ, the name? There was a senate under the vilest of the Roman emperors. The British house of commons might become, under a ministerial oligarchy, the mere levee of a prime minister. They might meet merely to bow and bow, receive their orders and douceurs, and then depart in peace.

The present state of the house of commons cannot



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be too generally known; and I therefore transcribe the following passage from the "Proceedings of the Society of the Friends of the People."

"The condition of the house of commons is practically as follows:

"Seventy-one peers and the Treasury nominate ninety members, and procure the return of seventy-seven, which amount to one hundred and sixty-seven. Ninety-one commoners nominate eighty-two members, and procure the return of fifty-seven, which amount to one hundred and thirty-nine."

So that the peers, the Treasury, and rich commoners with influence equal to peers, return three hundred and six members out of five hundred and thirteen, which is the whole number of English representatives in the house of commons. The Scotch members are not considered in this part of the Report.

The Society give the names of the different patrons at full length, to authenticate their statement; and I believe its accuracy and authenticity have never been controverted.

After observing that seventy-one peers and the Treasury nominate or procure the return of one hundred and sixty-seven members of parliament, who may vote away the people's money, and make laws, with the other branches, to bind many millions, let us remember, that at the commencement of every session, the following resolutions are entered on the Journals:

"Resolved, that no peer of this realm hath any right to give his vote in the election of any member to serve in parliament. Resolved, that it is a high infringement upon the liberties and privileges of the commons of Great Britain, for any lord of parliament, or any lord-lieutenant of any county, to con-

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cern themselves in the elections of members to serve for the commons in parliament."

The committee of the Friends of the People say, "they have been the more disposed to take notice of these resolutions, because the power of the house of lords, in matters of election, has been prodigiously increased, within the last ten years, by the creation of nine peers, who return, by nomination and influence, no less than twenty-four members to the house of commons. If, therefore, the interference of the Lords in the election of the commons be, as the latter uniformly declare, a high infringement of their liberties and privileges, the committee must report those liberties and privileges to have been of late subject to the most alarming and frequent attacks."

After producing facts that defy denial, I confidently leave every honest and sensible man in the kingdom, unblinded by prejudice, unwarped by interest, to determine whether the cause of liberty is not on the decline, and the spirit of despotism likely to avail itself of the general corruption of the aristocracy, and the tame acquiescence of the people.

I leave the question to be determined by such men, whether it is not possible that influence may create a complete despotism in a country, even while the forms of a free constitution are preserved inviolate?

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## SECTION XXX.

*The Spirit of Despotism delights in War or systematic Murder.*

"THE people of England are industrious, they are peaceful, they wish to enjoy the fruits of their indus-

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try without a war, and to recover their lost weight in our mixed frame of government, without the hazards of a revolution.

"It is from the prevalence of Mr. Burke's politics alone, among the upper classes of society, that the rise of any dangerous disaffection in this country is to be apprehended. To the plain sense of Englishmen, a war commenced with France, on his principles, must appear to be a war on French liberty, to beat down the equitable claims of reformation here, and eventually to destroy every valuable right of the people.

"Such will be the suspected motives for plunging this country in a war, in which our fleets may be victorious, but in which even our successes must be ruinous. For views thus wild and chimerical, the nation, whose wounds received in the late war with America are hardly yet closed up, must prepare to bleed afresh. For objects thus odious and detestable, the industrious classes of the people must forego their comforts; the shoulders, already galled with taxes, the pernicious consequence of former injustice and folly, must submit again to new and heavier impositions.

"They will be cheerfully voted, no doubt, by the faithful commons; but the commons will no longer enjoy the confidence of the public. Every vote of credit or supply will then increase the general disgust; and should no greater disaster befal us, the mere protraction of the war must exhaust the patience of a disabused people.

"But what may be the contagious effect of French opinions on a nation sick of the war of kings, groaning under an intolerable load of taxes, and hopeless of redress from men, whom they will cease to consider as representatives, it is needless to state.

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To foresee it, is easy; to prevent it, may be impossible."

Thus far the excellent Wyvill, in a letter to Mr. Pitt, in which he wisely dissuaded him from the unfortunate and disgraceful war, of which that minister must soon repent, though power and repentance do not usually unite. No dissuasion could cool Mr. Pitt's heroic ardour, or check his juvenile impetuosity. War was hastily commenced. The consequences were foretold, and the prediction is fulfilled.

But to an accurate observer it is an alarming proof of the spirit of despotism, when the great are eager to rush into war; when they listen to no terms of accommodation, and scorn to negotiate, in any mode or degree, previously to unsheathing the dreadful instrument of slaughter. If war, instead of being what it has been called, the *ratio ultima*, becomes the *ratio prima regum*, it is a proof that reason has lost her empire, and force usurped her throne.

Fear is the principle of all despotic government, and therefore despots make war their first study and delight. No arts and sciences, nothing that contributes to the comfort or the embellishment of human society, is half so much attended to, in countries where the spirit of despotism is established, as the means of destroying human life. Tigers, wolves, earthquakes, inundations, are all innocuous to man, when compared with the fiercest of monsters, the gory despots. Fiends, furies, demons of destruction! may the day be near, when, as wolves have been utterly exterminated from England, despots may be cut off from the face of the whole earth; and the bloody memory of them loaded with the execration of every human being, to whom God has given a heart to feel, and a tongue to utter!

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Wherever a particle of their accursed spirit is found, there also will be found a propensity to war. In times of peace, the grandees find themselves shrunk to the size of common mortals. A finer house, a finer coach, a finer coat, a finer livery than others can afford, is all that they can display to the eye of the multitude, in proof of their assumed superiority. Their power is inconsiderable. But no sooner do you blow the blast of war, and put armies under their command, than they feel themselves indeed great and powerful. A hundred thousand men, in battle array, with all the instruments of destruction, under the command of a few grandees, inferior, perhaps, in bodily strength, to every one of the subject train, and but little superior in intellect or courage, yet holding all, on pain of death, in absolute subjection; how must it elevate the little despots in their own opinion! "This it is to live," (they exclaim, shaking hands with each other) "this is to be great indeed. Now we feel our power. Glory be to us on high; especially as all our fame and greatness is perfectly compatible with our personal safety; for we will not risk our precious persons in the scene of danger, but be content with our extended patronage, with the delight of commanding the movements of this human machine, and with reading of the blood, slaughter, and burnt villages, in the Gazette, at our fire-side."

All the expense of war is paid by the people, and most of the personal danger incurred by those, who, according to some, have no political existence; I mean the multitude, told by the head, like sheep in Smithfield. Many of these troublesome beings in human form, are happily got rid of in the field of battle, and more by sickness and hardship previous or subsequent to the glorious day of butchery. Thus

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all makes for the spirit of despotism. There are, in consequence of a great carnage, fewer wretches left to provide for, or to oppose its will; and all the honour, all the profit, all the amusement, falls to the share of the grandees, thus raised from the insignificance and inglorious indolence of peace, to have their names blown over the world by the trumpet of Fame, and recorded in the page of history.

But a state of war not only gives a degree of personal importance to some among the great, which they could never obtain by the arts of peace, but greatly helps the cause of despotism. In times of peace the people are apt to be impertinently clamorous for reform. But in war, they must say no more on the subject, because of the public danger. It would be ill-timed. Freedom of speech also must be checked. A thousand little restraints on liberty are admitted, without a murmur, in a time of war, that would not be borne one moment during the halcyon days of peace. Peace, in short, is productive of plenty, and plenty makes the people saucy. Peace, therefore, must not continue long after a nation has arrived at a certain degree of prosperity. This is a maxim of Despotism. Political phlebotomy is necessary in a political plethora. "Bleed them *usque ad deliquium*," (said the arbitrary doctor,) "and I will undertake that in future the patient shall be more tractable."

Erasmus, the friend of man, the restorer of civil and religious liberty, has the following passage in a Dissertation on War, lately translated into English under the title of Antipolemus:

"There are kings who go to war for no other reason than that they may with greater ease establish despotic authority over their own subjects at home. For in time of peace, the power of parliaments, the

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dignity of magistrates, the vigour of the laws, are great impediments to a prince who wishes to exercise arbitrary power. But when once a war is undertaken, the chief management of affairs devolves on a few, the ministers of executive government, who, for the general safety, assume the privilege of conducting every thing according to their own humour, demanding unlimited confidence. The prince's favourites are all exalted to places of honour and profit. Those whom he dislikes are turned out and neglected. Now—(the time of war) is the time for raising as much money upon the people as the despot's heart can wish.—In short—now—the time of war, is the time that they feel themselves despots in very deed and truth, not in name only, but despots with a vengeance. In the mean while, the grandees play into one another's hands, until they have eaten up the wretched people, root and branch. Do you think men of such dispositions would be backward to seize any the slightest occasion for war, so lucrative, so flattering to avarice and vanity?"

Language has found no name sufficiently expressive of the diabolical villany of wretches in high life, who, without personal provocation, in the mere wantonness of power, and for the sake of increasing what they already possess in too great abundance, rush into murder! Murder of the innocent! Murder of myriads! Murder of the stranger! neither knowing nor caring how many of their fellow-creatures, with rights to life and happiness equal to their own, are urged by poverty to shed their last drops of blood in a foreign land, far from the endearments of kindred, to gratify the pride of a few at home, whose despotic spirit insults the wretchedness it first created. There is no greater proof of human folly and weakness than that a whole people should suffer a few

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worthless grandees, who evidently despise and hate them, to make the world one vast slaughter-house, that the grandees may have the more room to take their insolent pastime in unmolested state. A man, a reasonable being, a Christian, plunging the bayonet, without passion, into the bowels of a man, for hire! The poor creatures who actually do this (in despotic countries) are but mechanical instruments of knaves in power. Their poverty and not their will, consents. May Heaven's sweet mercy, then, wash off the blood stains from their hands, and reserve its wrath for those whose thirst of power, which they never had a wish to use for the good of man, leads them to wade to it through seas of human gore!

Let any dispassionate man, uninfluenced by placemen, pensioners, contractors, and expectants of court favour, impartially consider, from the earliest ages to the present, the history of war. He must observe that scarcely any wars have been just and necessary; though they almost all have claimed these epithets, with a persevering formality which would excite ridicule, if ridicule were not lost in abhorrence. He will find that folly, extreme folly, wearing a crown instead of a fool's cap, has, in many countries, from the mere wantonness of mischief, cried, "Havoc, and let slip the dogs of war." He will find that in most countries (our own, of course, always excepted) war has been eagerly sought, from policy, to divert the people's attention from domestic abuse, to aggrandise those who build the fabric of their grandeur on the ruins of human happiness, and to depress, impoverish, and humble the people.

There is nothing from which the spirit of liberty has so much to fear, and consequently the spirit of despotism so much to hope, as from the prevalence of military government, supported by vast standing

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armies, and encouraged by alliances with military despots on the continent of Europe. The whole energy of the sound part of our free constitution should be exerted in its full force to check a proud minister, who rashly runs into a war, and notwithstanding accumulated disasters, perseveres in its prosecution. He cannot hope for victory. He must have some other motive for persevering against all rational hope. Let the people investigate the motive; and if it be inimical to liberty, let them succour her in distress, by calling in her best auxiliary, peace.

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## SECTION XXXI.

*On the Idea that we have arrived at Perfection in Politics, though all other Sciences are in a Progressive State.*

Those who have been fortunate enough to have gained possession of honours and profits, under a corrupt system, well pleased with things as they are, boldly contend that they cannot be better. But these, compared with the mass of the community, are few, and ultimately of little consequence. Their opinion therefore must not weigh against any improvement which is likely to promote the melioration of human affairs. Let them enjoy unmolested the luxuries of the table, the splendour of equipages, large houses, and every other external advantage, which makes little men swell into fancied importance. In the mean time let every honest, benevolent member of the community, who is satisfied with being happy himself, without desiring to intrench on the happiness of others, endeavour to reform abuses, and promote every improvement which can render human life (short as it is, and full of calamity) more

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comfortable, and less exposed to the injuries and contumelies of the proud oppressor.

Rewards are offered for the discovery of the longitude at sea. Men are not only allowed but encouraged to prosecute their inquiries into all other arts and sciences. But the grand art, the art of government, that is, the art of securing the civil happiness of millions, is to be considered as sacred and inscrutable. Those very millions whom it more immediately interests, dare not, if the despots could prevail, to lift up the awful veil. Racks, gibbets, bowstrings, chains, and prisons, are prepared, in most of the kingdoms of the world, to awe the curious, and check the spirit of political improvement. Optimism has long been established in the courts of despotic princes. Whatever is, is right, say they; for knowing that they stand on a rotten foundation, they fear that the very fixing of the scaffold for repair would precipitate the downfal of the whole fabric.

Is it to be believed that governments were brought to perfection in early and dark ages, when the minds of the great as well as the little were enveloped in the mists of ignorance, and shackled by the chains of superstition? Is it reasonable to suppose that they who were narrow-minded, ill-informed, childish, and barbarous in all other parts of knowledge and of conduct, were liberal, wise, and illuminated in the science and practice of government; so liberal, so wise, so illuminated, as to strike out at once a system complete in all its parts, and such as could in no subsequent age, in no variety of circumstances, admit of correction, addition, or melioration? Did this wonderful sagacity, approaching to inspiration, produce any thing else, in any other department, which defies all improvement, and challenges the respect and veneration of the latest pos-

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terity? Reasoning from analogy, we must conclude, that men, capable of establishing at once a perfect system of government, must have produced other inventions for the accommodation and security of life, worthy to be preserved inviolate, and handed down unaltered, till time itself be absorbed in the ocean of eternity. But where shall we look for it? The very question implies a doubt of its existence; for singular excellence, such excellence as approaches to perfection, cannot be concealed, but will shine with its own lustre, and force observation and wonder. Is the architecture of these paragons of wisdom superior to the modern, in beauty or convenience? Let us only walk the streets of London, and mark those houses which were spared by the great fire, and which may fairly be supposed improvements on the more ancient fabrics. We see them, contrary to every principle of common sense, with stories projecting over each other. We see them ugly, mean, inconvenient. Let us proceed to the north-west parts of that great town. Take a view of Portland-place. Contrast the symmetry, the accommodation, the magnificence, with the old edifices of Holborn or Aldersgate, and be persuaded that modern improvements in government might be as much superior to the work of ancient bunglers, as the elegant buildings in our new squares to the old mansions now converted into inns, in the dirtiest streets, in the most decayed districts of the metropolis.

Man is a progressive animal, and his advance towards improvement is a pleasurable state. Hope cheers his path as he toils up the hill that leads him to something better than he has yet experienced, on its gay summit gilded with sunshine. The labour of the ascent is a delight. But if he cannot help con-

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ceiving, from a sense of grievances which he feels, something excellent, to which he is prohibited by coercion from approaching, hope sickens, and ill humour succeeds to complacency. Hence arises a disagreement between the governed and the governors; and the governors being possessed of present power, use force and rigour to stifle the murmurs of complaint. Coercion but increases the ill humour, which often lies latent, like the fires of a volcano, for a considerable time, but at last bursts forth with irresistible fury. It is wise, therefore, as well as just, in all governors, who have a regard for any thing but their present and private interest, to encourage discussion, to seek improvement of the system, and to reject no reform proposed by great numbers, without a cool, a temperate, and a long deliberation. The reasons for rejection should be clearly stated, with the utmost regard to open and ingenuous behaviour; and those who remain unconvinced, after all, should not be treated with asperity. Every individual, in a free country, has a right to approve or disapprove the system under which he lives, without peril or controul, while he preserves the peace. His peaceable deportment and acquiescence in the opinion of others, contrary to his own conviction, renders him a very meritorious character. He may be won over by gentleness; but force only tends to excite the violence which it would imperiously repel.

But to tell a man of sense, reading, and reflection, that he must not venture to entertain an opinion on political matters, or the existing government, different from that of the minister and the herd of courtiers, is an impotent endeavour to exercise a despotism over his mind, against which nature revolts, and a manly spirit must rebel. Such a man can usually judge of governments, and all the institutions of social life, better than mere men of business, how-

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ever high their rank or important their employments; far better than courtiers, occupied in vain ceremonies, and usually as little able as inclined to enter into deep disquisition.

Indeed it is difficult to avoid laughing at the extreme ignorance of crowned heads themselves, in despotic countries, when one contrasts it with the importance they assume, and the pomp and splendour with which they transfer their royal persons from place to place. The sight is truly ludicrous. Are these the men, occupied, as they usually are, in the meanest trifles and the most degrading pleasures, who tell us that the government over which they preside, is a perfect system, and that the wisest philosopher knows not how to govern mankind; that is, to consult their happiness and security, so well as themselves, neglected as they have been in youth, and corrupted in manhood by panders to their vices, and flatterers of their foibles, their pride, and their ambition? There is reason to believe that many kings, in despotic kingdoms, have been less well educated, and possess less abilities, than a common charity-boy, trained in a parish school to read and write. Yet these are the men who, with their upstart creatures, presume to call philosophers wretches, and to condemn the Voltaires, the Rousseaus, the Sydneys, the Harringtons, and the Lockes.

There are persons, even in countries where limited royalty is established, who are for ever extolling the constitution, with all the abuses that have insinuated themselves into it, in terms of extravagant and unqualified praise. They talk against better knowledge, and may therefore be suspected of some sinister motive. They can see defects as well as others; but they assume the worst of all blindness, that which is voluntary.

The truth is, these men, for the most part, are

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such as would not like the constitution in its purity, because in its purity the constitution is really excellent, and highly favourable to the liberty which they hate. The constitution, in its purity, renders the people of consequence, whose political existence they are inclined to controvert or deny. But the constitution, in its state of corruption, is favourable to prerogative, to aristocratical pride and influence, to tory and jacobitical principles; therefore it is, in their eyes, criminal to handle it, to hint at its improvement, to remove a grievance, or reform an abuse. The whole, together, though violated every day by corrupt influence, they affect to consider as a written charter, dropt down from heaven, like the old Roman Ancilia, and therefore scarcely to be viewed by vulgar eyes, and certainly not to be touched by the hand of the profane people.

Despotism is so ugly in its form, and so hostile, in its nature, to human happiness, that no wonder those who wish to diffuse its spirit are inclined to check and discourage among the people all political investigation. But let it be a rule among those who really value liberty and the constitution, to use the more diligence in political discussions, in proportion as courtiers and ministers display a wish to suppress political writings and conversations; and disseminate the doctrine, that things are so well constituted as neither to require nor admit any improvement.

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## SECTION XXXII.

*On Political Ethics; their chief Object is to throw Power into the Hands of the worst Part of Mankind, and to render Government an Institution calculated to enrich and aggrandize a few, at the expense of the Liberty, Property, and Lives of the many.*

In the schools of early discipline, where youth is



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usually initiated in the studies of humanity, men are taught to believe that virtue is founded on eternal truth, and that the distinctions of right and wrong are as clearly definable as those between the meridian sunshine and the midnight shade. They are told, from the highest authority, that happiness is to be found in rectitude of conduct; and that under all circumstances, whatever may be the consequence, nothing can justify the dereliction of integrity. The sacred scriptures, the ancient philosophers, parental authority, the laws of their country, and the proclamations of kings, all combine to convince them that morality is founded on the rock of truth, and that governments are sincere in their professions to encourage those who do well, and be a terror only to the evil.

Why was a national church instituted and supported at a great expense, but to enforce among the people the laws of God, as paramount to all human laws, and superseding the wretched devices of state policy? Government, by entering into a strict alliance with the church, certainly engages to support the doctrines of Christian morality; and it is no less impious in a king or a minister to promote or increase any public measures repugnant to Christian morality, than it would be in the bench of bishops.

When we enter our libraries, we find ourselves surrounded with authors, celebrated for ages by the most enlightened part of the world, who teach the immutability of truth, enforce the purest doctrines of morality, and endeavour to found the dignity and happiness of human nature on the basis of virtue.

But let us leave a moment the school, the church, the library, and enter a court and a cabinet. There Machiavelian ethics prevail; and all that has been previously inculcated appears like the tales of the

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nursery, calculated to amuse babes, and lull them in the lap of folly. The grand object of counsellors is to support and increase the power that appoints to splendid and profitable offices, with little regard to the improvement of human affairs, the alleviation of the evils of life, and the melioration of human nature. The restraints of moral honesty, or the scruples of religion, must seldom operate on public measures so as to impede the accomplishment of this primary and momentous purpose. A little varnish is indeed used, to hide the deformity of Machiavelism; but it is so very thin, and so easily distinguished from the native colour, that it contributes, among thinking men, to increase the detestation which it was intended to extenuate.

Thus, for instance, treaties between nations commence with a most solemn avowal of good faith, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Great and mighty nations, professing Christianity, maintaining a church, and united most intimately with the church, enter into agreements, under this awful sanction, and break them without the least reluctance, whenever a cabinet minister finds it in his inclination, or imagines it his interest to cause a rupture. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are little thought of; but the great object is to strike a blow with advantage, before the adverse nation is on its guard, and while it is relying on the treaty.

Another instance of political religion is conspicuous in the prevailing practice of rendering the emoluments of the church subservient to the minister, in securing him a majority, and facilitating what is called his principal duty, the management of the senate.

The Roman pontiffs, while in the rank of inferior clergy, and even of cardinals, have exhibited the



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appearance of great piety, and a religious regard to truth and justice; but when advanced to the triple mitre, and become, in fact, kings, they have usually become perfectly secular in their public conduct at home, and in their connections with surrounding nations, and have pleaded, in excuse, state necessity. But can any necessity arise to violate the eternal laws of truth and justice? Is religion a leaden rule, in the hands strong enough to bend it to their various purposes? Pope Julius the Second appears to have been one of the very worst princes that ever reigned. He delighted in war, while he professed to be the representative of the Prince of Peace. He was guilty of oppression and injustice; and while he pretended to be feeding the sheep of Christ, gave himself no other concern but how he might secure the fleece. Yet all his conduct was palliated, by the politicians around him, from the plea of state necessity. Morality and religion gave way to the system of political ethics; and he, who ought to have blessed mankind, and to have preached peace, became their oppressor, despot, and unrelenting murderer. I mention Julius only as a striking instance, and hundreds may be adduced, of the depraved system which rules cabinets, and which, for the gratification of the few, renders the many miserable. No Machiavels can ever justify, in the eyes of God, or of men uninfluenced by corruption, any politics, however subtle and able, which, for the sake of aggrandizing a nation, (an abstract idea,) much less of gratifying a court, render all the individuals of the nation so to be aggrandized, poor, wretched, insecure, and slavish.

Let us suppose a nation entering most eagerly, and without listening one moment to terms of accommodation, into a most dangerous war, professedly to

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exterminate the bad principles and morals of a neighbouring people, and to defend law, order, and religion. It is impossible to imagine but that a nation acting in this manner, and with this profession, must regulate all its own public conduct, especially in a war of this kind, according to the strictest law, order, and religion.

Will that nation oppose an armed neutrality, instituted to prevent the interruption of neutral commerce? Will she maintain her reputation for justice, if she should be the first and most violent in destroying this neutrality? Will she break the law of nations, by insulting ambassadors? Will she take up arms, and actually fight in defence of popery, after professing herself at the head of protestantism, and the opposer of all intolerant superstition? Will she, after declaring herself the friend of order, religion, and liberty, enter into alliances with and subsidize the plunderers and oppressors of Poland? Will she, pluming herself upon the love of order and religion, and detesting the cruelty of the nation with whom she is at war, suffer Asia to be pillaged, and its inhabitants to be slaughtered by her own sons; or encourage the Indians to attack her brethren in North America; or hire mercenaries of German princes to do the work of death, in a contest in which they have no immediate concern? Will she endeavour to starve a whole nation, with whom she is at war, not only the rulers and warriors, but infants, women, and old people, by preventing the importation of corn? Will she forge assignats? Will she continue the slave trade?

A conduct like this appears to be not only inconsistent with the pretended defence of law, order, and religion, but at once proceeding from the spirit of despotism, and promotive of it. It is certain that a

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man in private life, acting in this manner, would be thought a bad man, a man destitute of principle, and with whom it would be scarcely less dangerous to be on terms of professed friendship than of open enmity. But actions do not alter their nature with the paucity or multiplicity of the actors; and a nation may be guilty of perfidy, as atrocious and contemptible in its nature as an individual, and infinitely more mischievous. Certainly the advisers and abettors of such conduct do not take the most effectual means of recommending to mankind that monarchy which they wage war to reestablish. They are hurting the cause of kings in the minds of independent men and of posterity, while they blindly appear to themselves to be promoting it with the greatest energy.

Whatever may be urged by sophists or politicians, it is certain that the great eternal laws of truth and justice cannot be violated with impunity. The violation may answer some sordid and temporary purpose; but in the end, it must be injurious, if not fatal. Truth, like the sun in the heavens, is one. The clouds indeed are variegated; but then they are insubstantial, and of momentary existence. So is falsehood. It can assume any colour. But time causes the hues to fade; and truth bursts forth with new effulgence. We see despotism gradually withdrawing from the finest countries of Europe. It must depart, at last, from all, for it is opposed by reason and nature. They who endeavour to render it permanent, labour in vain; but at the same time, they may detain it a while, and cause, in the interval, misery and carnage.

Let us reject all Machiavelism, all political ethics, that contradict the acknowledged principles of truth and moral honesty. There can be no legitimate government which is not founded and supported by

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systems of conduct favourable to the happiness of human creatures,—the great mass of the people. Good government cannot be formed on the basis of falsehood and chicanery. Let the government of England ever stand on the square, solid, upright pedestals of truth and justice, and it must defy every shock, but the convulsion of the world's dissolution.

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## SECTION XXXIII.

*On trafficking with the Cure of Souls,* (Cura Animarum,) *for the Purposes of Political, i. e. Moral, Corruption.*

The parish priests of a protestant country, when they are, what they ought to be, and what they would usually be, if it were not for political influence, Christian orators and Christian philosophers, are the most useful body of men, considering their numbers and their power, in the whole community. The good they are able to do is beyond all estimate; but unfortunately, it is a sort of good not always taken into the account of those who are in pursuit of more palpable advantages, solid gold, high station, and dominion over their fellow-creatures. The proper business of the clergy is to mortify this very pride, the indulgence of which is, to their courtly patrons, the *summum bonum,* the chief good of existence.

These persons, not having time or inclination to attend to religion, or any thing but the pomp and vanity of the world, idolizing themselves, and unwilling to acknowledge any other Deity, consider religion and the church merely as state engines; powerful engines, in conjunction with military force, to press down the elastic spirit of the people. They think, indeed, the emoluments attending ecclesiastical

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functions too much, if considered as recompenses for religious services, which, in their minds, are no services at all, but scarcely enough, when converted into douceurs for the business of corruption, the grand object of modern ministers.

Ambitious noblemen, therefore, buy boroughs, and, like Lord Melcombe, send their myrmidons to the senate; and ministers pay the expense of the purchase, by conferring the highest ecclesiastical dignities, with stipends of many thousands a-year, designed originally to be spent in charity, on the younger brothers, the cousins, the tutors, or the agents of these borough-mongers. It is indeed deemed politic, now and then, to raise a very ingenious, learned, and pious man to one of the small bishoprics, but seldom without contriving to promote, at the same time, the grand business of corruption. This ingenious, learned, and pious man, *un evêque de la fortune*, is highly satisfied with the dignity and emolument of his office. What need has he of the patronage appendant to it? In this age, it were a childish weakness, something similar to the simplicity recommended in the gospel, to give away good things to modest merit. But, though he has no need of the patronage: there are those, to whom he is bound, by every tie of gratitude, who want it all. He therefore understands that the cure of souls is to be given to persons whom the prime minister may recommend; as the Duke of Newcastle recommended Burroughs and Franklin, whom he had never seen or known, to the patronage of the lord chancellor. A translation may be impeded, if scruples of conscience should prevent an obsequious compliance with a minister's congé d'elire. "As to fitness or unfitness," (cries the friend of corruption,) any man that can read is sufficient, for both prayers and sermons are ready

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made; and even if it were supposable that a man could not read, a parish, that pays the rector a thousand a-year, may be supplied with an ingenious curate for eighty."

Formerly learning was scarce among the laity. The clergy engrossed what little there was in the world, and made themselves necessary to the state, not only in ecclesiastical, but political offices and employments. "Before the Reformation," (says a learned writer,") "the canon law was in great use and esteem, and of great use; and while the laity were in general unlettered, or employed in a military life, the king made use of clergymen, skilled in this law, in the offices of the chancery, privy seal, secretary of state, in the courts of justice, and in embassies. The king rewarded men thus qualified to do him service, with benefices and other ecclesiastical preferments; and the lord chancellor or lord keeper, in particular, was furnished with many advowsons, to which, as they became vacant, he might present worthy masters and clerks in chancery, who were then all clergymen; which advowsons still continue in his gift, though the reason thereof hath long since ceased." But one reason having ceased, others may have risen still more weighty. We have already remarked, more than once, how that prime minister the Duke of Newcastle used the advowsons in the gift of the crown. We know how preferment is bestowed in Ireland as well as England. We remember the old manner of appointment to the provostship of Trinity-college, Dublin.

The excellent divine from whom the last quotation was taken, speaking of clergymen honoured and enriched with two cures of souls, proceeds thus: "I do not deny but there are pluralists of great ecclesiastical merit; but I do deny that in general plural-

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ists have greater merit that unalists, or than many in orders who have no living at all; or that pluralists in general, become pluralists for their ecclesiastical merit.

"Read over the list of pluralists in England, and see whether this sort of merit be universally, or generally, or commonly, regarded in the dispensations granted them to hold pluralities. See whether the judge of this sort of merit hath power, if he were ever so well inclined, to regard it universally, or generally, or commonly: see whether the motive of the patron to present a clerk to a second living, hath, in one instance out of twenty, been his eminent ecclesiastical merit; or whether the same favour would not have been bestowed on the same person, had his merit been inferior; nay, in many cases, upon the same person, although instead of merit there had been demerit; and very often also, if not the more likely, if instead of want of a competence, there had been affluence. See whether the merit, which hath been sometimes considered in this case, hath not, instead of ecclesiastical merit, been political opinions, serviceableness in elections, private treaties, domestic negotiations, and other mean offices, below the consideration and interposition of ecclesiastics, and hurtful to the ecclesiastical character. With some patrons, there is not one of these qualifications that is not a stronger motive than parts, and learning, and piety, and prudence, and virtue put together." Thus said Dr. Newton, the founder and head of a college in Oxford, at a time when the cure of souls was not considered as so trifling a care as it has been by more recent ministers, who have seemed ready to sacrifice both soul and body to the gaining of a majority in the senate. The church once preserved her own dignity with a noble inde-

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pendence; but now she must bow, like a lackey, to the vilest minister of state.

But what is this cura animarum, this office of watching over the spiritual state of populous districts? Is it not, on the hypothesis that the Christian religion is true, the most important office that can be undertaken by man on this side the grave? Is not the power of appointing to that office a trust most sacred, if there be any thing sacred here below? What is sacrilege? the stealing of a cushion or silver chalice from a church? And is it no sacrilege to steal the church itself, and all its emoluments, designed to prevent the increase of corruption, in order to reward and to promote corruption? Is the cura animarum to be the last consideration in the patron's mind, though the first in the eye of reason and religion? And is all this injustice, sacrilege, impiety, and blasphemy to be endured, because the gift of the stipend, the endowment, the tithes, the fees, buy an elector, who swears, at the time of giving his vote, that he has not received a bribe? Is it to be wondered, if, under such abuses, religion should be on the decline! Do the writings of infidels, or the venal practices of patrons, contribute most to exterminate Christianity? What has a similar system in France effected, carried indeed to still greater lengths, but still similar? The greedy rapaciousness of court sycophants in England is doing the work of antichrist, and destroying civil liberty.

But I am chiefly concerned at present to consider the using the church, or the cure of souls, for the corruption of the state and the violation of the constitution, as a political enormity. It certainly contributes to the spirit of despotism. It naturally tends to make all the youth in the nation, who enter on this sacred profession, look up to court favour, and

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not to depend on their own merit or exertions, for promotion. It prevents them from voting freely at elections. It prevents them from preaching freely from the pulpit. Its natural tendency is to make them what they ought particularly to avoid, adulators, worldly wise, parasitical, and acceptors of men's persons for the sake of advantage. They must know, under such a system, that if they vote according to conscience, or preach or write according to the truth as it is in Jesus, they must forego all those prospects of rising in their profession, which, if merit were rewarded, are a stimulus to every thing that can benefit human nature. Clerical men, infirm, like others, often sink under this temptation. Few can renounce great temporal advantages for the sake of promoting public good, especially when they are sure of persecution as well as neglect. Now, what must be the consequence to liberty, of a whole national clergy rendered expectant on the favour of a court, and a proud aristocracy? May we not hear again from the pulpit, the doctrines of divine right and passive obedience; the same doctrines in effect, under names less offensive to the people! Have we not lately heard them?

There is no mode of promoting the purposes of corruption, and the aggrandizement of those who already engross the pomp of grandeur, more injurious to liberty, and more villanously base, than that of seizing the appointments and rewards of piety and virtue, to bestow them on those, whose worldly wisdom is their chief recommendation, and who seem ready to worship God only in the second place, if they worship him at all.

The Tindals, the Collinses, the Bolingbrokes, the Humes, the Gibbons, the Voltaires, the Volneys, the "miscreant" philosophers of France, never did so

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much injury to the cause of Christianity, as those English ministers of state, who, while they shed the blood of thousands for the sake of law, order, and religion, prostitute the church and the cure of souls to the corruption of the senate.

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## SECTION XXXIV.

*Of Mr. Hume's Idea, That absolute Monarchy is the easiest Death, the true Euthanasia of the British Constitution.*

The very ingenious speculatist, Mr. Hume, seems to wish as well as think, that as death is unavoidable by the political as well as the animal body, the British constitution may die in the arms of despotism. His words are, "I would much rather wish to see an absolute monarch than a republic in this island. Absolute monarchy is the easiest death, the true euthanasia of the British constitution."

His opinion that our free government will terminate in despotism, seems founded on the following argument, which he has inserted in his Essay on the British Government.

"The British spirit and love of liberty, however great, will never be able to support itself against that immense property which is now lodged in the king, and is still increasing. Upon a moderate computation, there are near three millions annually at the disposal of the crown. The civil list amounts to near a million; the collection of all taxes to another million; and the employments in the army and navy, along with ecclesiastical preferments, to above a third million. A monstrous sum! and what may fairly be computed to be more than a thirtieth part of the whole income and labour of the kingdom. When we add to this immense property the increas-

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ing luxury of the nation, our proneness to corruption, along with the great power and prerogatives of the crown, and the command of such numerous military forces, there is no one but must despair, without extraordinary efforts, of being able to support our free government much longer, under all these disadvantages."

But why should not "extraordinary efforts" be made, when the object is extraordinary—no less than the preservation of human happiness, by the preservation of civil liberty? No efforts should be declined in such a cause; nor should men, sensible of their blessings, and desirous of handing them down as they received them, sink, with dastardly indolence, into a state of despair.

Mr. Hume, with all his penetration, could not foresee the revolution of France; and how much the establishment of liberty, in that extensive and enlightened country, would contribute to defeat the purpose of despots in all the nations of Europe. It is certain that the minds of the people in all countries are opened to the light of truth, by the emancipation of nearly thirty millions of men, from the slavery of prejudice and arbitrary dominion. There is now very little occasion for that despair of preserving the freedom of the British government, if the people will but be true to their own cause. Despotism, in its last struggles, may make great efforts; but even they will exhaust its strength, and accelerate its dissolution. Firmness and perseverance in the people will ultimately triumph over the unnatural exertions of despotism, driven to madness by despair.

The spirit of liberty, it has been said, is a spirit of jealousy. It ought to be ever-waking and circumspect; for the spirit of despotism never slumbers,

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but watches every opportunity to increase prerogative, and diminish popular authority. During those late alarms which cowardly and selfish aristocracy laboured to diffuse, in its panic fear for its own privileges, many instances occurred of men who would willingly have sacrificed all the boasted freedom of Englishmen to the security which they flattered themselves grandeur, titles, and riches would enjoy under an absolute government. Their pride was stung to the quick by the idea of equality, while their avarice trembled for their property, and their cowardice for their personal safety. They saw spectres in the shapes of Truth, Justice, and Liberty, triumphing over an enslaved and deluded world; they knew that they had little interest or connection with such personages, and shuddered at their fancied approach. They shrieked with terror; and would gladly have hastened to the greatest despot on earth for protection. England had no despot on the throne to afford them an asylum; and therefore they placed all their hopes on the military arm. War was the cry; victory was sure. Bastiles were already built in imagination, and chains fabricated for the millions that people the provinces of Gaul.

Had it been possible for these men to prevail, in the moment of their consternation, the sceptre of England would have been converted by them into an iron rod, and its king into the grand monarque of the old French tyranny. Despotism, expelled from France, would have crossed from Calais to Dover, and been received with open arms by devoted vassals, the slavish alarmists of an English aristocracy. The free government of England might have found at this period, as Mr. Hume prophesies it will hereafter do, an easy death in absolute monarchy.

But though the high church and king alarmists did

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not succeed at that time, which seemed auspicious to their designs, yet still they continue on their posts, watching opportunities to infringe on liberty, to seduce the people from their love of it, and gradually to reconcile them to arbitrary rule.

Strange as it is, as a moral phenomenon, that men should wish to be slaves, yet it is certain, that the tribe of persons devoted to the pomp and power of uncontrolled royalty, whom I call tories or aristocrats for want of a more appropriate and precise appellation, are still extremely zealous to make our king a far superior potentate than he is allowed to be by that revolution, which gives him all the royal rights he possesses, and places him on the throne.

Many circumstances favour the wishes of these persons; and nothing opposes them so much as the French revolution, and those liberal opinions on the rights and happiness of man which begin to prevail, wherever courts and ministers have little influence. Among the circumstances which flatter them most with the extension of royal power, the elevation of themselves, and the depression of the people, is the interest which almost every man and woman in the nation possesses in the public funds, and which they are all taught to believe would be depreciated, or even annihilated, if the parliament were reformed, the people reinstated in their rights, and the influence of the crown diminished. This has communicated the panic of the alarmists among multitudes too remote from courts, and too inconsiderable in station, to be influenced by ministerial bribes; who, otherwise, could not but have sided with the cause of justice and humanity. The terror of anarchy, occasioned by the impolitic as well as barbarously cruel conduct of some among the first leaders of the emancipated French, has increased the number of

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ministerial partisans and favourers of extended power and prerogative.

Were it possible that a panic could be permanent, or falsehood and artifice ultimately victorious over truth and justice, there might be reason to fear, from the spirit which the alarmists diffused, that English liberty might soon sicken, and at last die paralytic in the arms of despotism. But notwithstanding a temporary lethargy, the mass of the people, those who are quite out of the reach of courtiers and grandees, still retain the healthy vigour of their fathers' virtue, and would rouse themselves effectually to prevent the accomplishment of Mr. Hume's prediction. They must indeed be lulled with the Circèan cup of corruption to sleep on, and take their rest, when the giant Despotism is at their doors, ready to crush, with his mace, all that renders life valuable to men; to men who have learned to think that mere vegetation is not life. But Circè's cup is not capacious enough to contain opiate for a whole people. All the douceurs of a minister, all the patronage in the professions, all the riches of the east and the west, are insufficient to bribe the obscure millions, who constitute the base of the political fabric, into complete acquiescence under the pressure of despotic power, or under the apprehension of it. The light of reason and of learning is too widely diffused to be easily extinguished. There is every reason to believe that it will shine more and more unto a perfect day.

But as popular commotion is always to be dreaded, because bad men always arise to mislead its efforts, how desirable is it that it may be prevented, by conciliatory measures, by a timely concession of rights, by redress of grievances, by reformation of abuses, by convincing mankind that



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governments have no other object than faithfully to promote the comfort and security of individuals, without sacrificing the solid happiness of living men to national glory, or royal magnificence. True patriotism and true philosophy, unattached to names of particular men, or even to parties, consider the happiness of man as the first object of all rational governments; and, convinced that nothing is more injurious to the happiness of man than the spirit of despotism, endeavour to check its growth, at its first and slightest appearance.

If the free government of England evinces, by its conduct, that the happiness of the people is its sole object, so far from dreading the late Mr. Hume's prophecy that it will die in the arms of despotism, we may venture to predict that it will never die. My orisons shall be offered for its perpetuity; for I, and all who think with me, on this subject, are its true friends; while the boroughmongers, under the cloak of loyalty, are enemies both to the king and the people.

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## SECTION XXXV.

*The Permission of Lawyers by Profession, aspiring to Honours in the Gift of the Crown, to have the greatest Influence in the Legislature, a Circumstance unfavourable to Liberty.*

When advocates address each other at the bar, they adopt the appellation of "learned brother." There certainly is a necessity for great learning in the profession of the long robe. But of what kind is the learning required? It is undoubtedly of a kind very little connected with philosophy or enlargement of the mind. It is confined to local customs, judicial decisions, the statutes of a single nation, and the

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practice of the courts. It pores upon the letter of the law, and scarcely dares to contemplate the spirit. It is for the most part employed in minute disquisitions, in finding exceptions, in seeking subterfuges, and often in making the great eternal rules of equity give way to the literal meaning of a narrow and unjust statute, or the principles of some former determination, made by unenlightened men in times little removed from barbarism, and certainly both slavish and superstitious.

Is the education of professional and practising lawyers particularly calculated to expand the intellect, or to fill the heart with sentiments of peculiar honour and generosity; such sentiments as alone can constitute a worthy lawgiver, and an all-accomplished statesman? Is it not confined to particular and minute objects, instead of taking in the whole horizon of human concernments? Some of those who have risen to the first honours and emoluments, have had a truly liberal education; but many have been trained either in the office of an attorney, or special pleader in exercises that contribute no more to liberalize or improve the heart, than the copying of instruments, the studying of precedents, the perusal of statutes, and the knowledge of forms. The finest faculties of the human constitution, the imagination and sentimental affections, have little room for play, where the eye and memory are chiefly concerned; and where the mind is obliged to labour in the trammels of dismal formalities, like the horse in harness, dragging a heavy vehicle in the wheel-ruts made by those who have gone before, without the liberty of deviation. A hard head, a cold heart, with a tenacious memory and firm nerves, are likely to succeed best in such toil, which requires less of speed than of patient plodding perseverance.



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A dull man, trained in this dull manner, may become a very useful lawyer, and certainly deserving of all the fees and emoluments of his profession. But does it follow that he must be a statesman, a senator, a cabinet counsellor, fitted to determine on questions of peace and war, and to consult and promote the happiness of human nature? A lawyer, by singular felicity of genius and disposition, may be fit for the momentous task; and I only ask whether his education, and the studies and employments of his profession, are such as to render him preeminently a statesman, and director of the measures of government? Because he may, for a fee, plead successfully on any side, cunningly conduct a trial, or skilfully expound a statute, is he therefore more likely than all others to frame laws of the most beneficent kind, having a view, not to particular cases only, but to the general welfare? All his studies of jurisprudence have been merely for the sake of lucre, and not free and disinterested, like those of the general scholar, the philosopher, and philanthropist.

The lawyer has, however, better opportunities for displaying his knowledge and abilities than the members of other professions. Men have recourse to him on matters very dear to their hearts; matters of property. With the sagacity of a very moderate intellect, and a knowledge acquired by dint of mere labour and long practice, he may be able to transact their pecuniary business with skill and success. He becomes, therefore, a favourite with men of property in the nation, which, whenever corruption prevails, will contribute much to push any aspirant up the ladder of promotion. He soon pants for rewards extraneous to his profession. It is not enough to be a member of parliament or a judge, he must be a peer of the realm, a counsellor of state, a chief di-

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rector in the upper house. It is painful to behold all the old nobility, educated, as they have been, at the greatest expense, improved by private tutors and by travel, crouching to a man, who has acquired effrontery in the courts below, and whose unblushing audacity has been the chief cause of the elevation, at which himself is surprised.

Men like these, emboldened by success, and accustomed, from their earliest entrance into active life, to browbeat and overbear, assume a right to guide the opinions of the senate and the council in the most important measures of state. They become, in fact, the rulers of the nation; but owing their elevation to the favour of a court, and placing all their expectations of farther honours on its continuance, they become devoted to its purposes. They are, in fact, still attornies and solicitors, ready to exert all their powers of sophistry, and to exhaust all their stores of chicanery, to defend the measures of the minister, by rendering law, as far as they can, a leaden rule. The old peers sit in silent admiration; while men, furnished with all the subtleties of practising lawyers, long hacknied and hardened in the paltry business of private individuals, presume to dictate peace or war, to impede or prevent salutary reform, and keep the church, the army, and the navy, under their supreme controul. Such is their habitual volubility and confirmed assurance, that men of more liberal minds, but of less self-conceit and less notoriety, stand in awe of them, and suffer them, with abject acquiescence, to domineer. But however they may oppose the people's right, and the happiness of the public, they are sure to espouse the cause of those from whom comes their promotion. They therefore contribute to diffuse the spirit of despotism, more than any other profession.

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"But," says the minister, "their assistance in the lower house is not sufficient, we must have able men in the house of lords; therefore we must have new men; and they must be selected from a profession accustomed to public business, and which gives those who belong to it opportunities of making an open display of their abilities." This is a sad compliment to the hereditary nobility; as it seems to argue that they are totally unfit to conduct the business that comes before them, without attornies and solicitors from below, who are ennobled merely to save the credit of the peerage. But the truth is, the minister wishes to have some sharp and tractable tools, by which he may do his dirty work, uninterrupted by the interference of those who, possessing a constitutional right to examine it, would perhaps often censure it, if they were not overawed and overborne by those who pretend to be initiated in the mysteries of law.

In consequence of this management, a whole profession (always happily, with a few splendid exceptions,) extremely busy both with tongue and pen, is constantly enlisted in the service of a minister. A great number of attornies and solicitors, besides the gentlemen officially honoured with those names, are constantly retained on the side of the court, and consequently lean, for their own sakes, and with a hope of making their families, to the extension of crown influence and prerogative. A set of men, so subtle, so active, so attentive to interest, must serve any cause which they choose to espouse; and there is no doubt but that they greatly serve (in the hope of serving themselves) the cause of despotism.

Let any one who is unacquainted with the pains taken by modern ministers to retain the lawyers on the side of prerogative, inspect the court calendar,

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and remark how great a portion of the modern peers have owed their coronets entirely to their profession as lawyers, to their qualifications as mere men of business in detail, with very scanty knowledge of any thing else, and with small claims to excellence as patriots, philosophers, or philanthropists. Mere men of business commonly fix their eyes on objects of private lucre or temporal elevation alone. They are apt to laugh at the names of patriotism, liberty, and disinterested virtue. They have commonly been too long hacknied among the lowest of mankind, not perhaps in rank only, but in spirit, knowledge, liberality, to retain any very scrupulous delicacy in their own bosoms, or to believe its existence in others. They consider the good things of the world as a scramble, where every man is to get what he can by address, and bold pretension, since the law will not allow the use of violence. Certainly there can be no hope of reform, while men so versed in corruption, so enriched by it, and so well pleased with it, bear sway in senates, and direct the councils of princes.

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## SECTION XXXVI.

*Poverty, when not extreme, favourable to all Virtue, public and private, and consequently to the Happiness of human Nature; and enormous Riches, without Virtue, the general Bane.*

Superfluity of riches, like superfluity of food, causes sickness and debility. Poverty, or mediocrity of fortune, is the nurse of many virtues; of modesty, industry, sobriety. But, in this age, the very name of poverty is odious. Poverty is a haggard phantom that appals half the world, and drives them over seas, into torrid zones, to disease and death! Life itself

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is thought by many a gift fit to be thrown back again into the face of the Almighty Donor, if it is not accompanied with the means of luxury, the means of making a figure beyond others; in a word, the means of indulging the spirit of despotism. Things are so managed, in a state of deep political corruption, that the honours due only to virtue are paid to money; and those who want not riches for the sake of indulgence in pleasure, or from the love of money itself, grow complete misers, in the hope of obtaining, together with opulence, civil honours, seats in the senate-house, and royal favour. They hope to make themselves of consequence enough to be corrupted, or rather purchased, by the state.

What is the consequence to the people, the labourer, the manufacturer, the retail trader, to poor families with many children, women with small patrimonies, annuitants, dependents, and all the numerous train of persons who are compelled to live, as the common phrase expresses it, from hand to mouth? Their gains or means are fixed, and by no means rise with the rising price of necessaries. But, in consequence of this rage for riches, the necessaries of life become not only dearer, but worse in quality; less nourishing, less commodious, and less durable. Landlords raise their rents to the utmost possible extent; each determining to make his rent-roll as respectable as some opulent neighbour, favoured by a lord lieutenant for his influence. They will not let their farms in little portions, to poor industrious tenants; but to some overgrown monopolizer, who is in as much haste to grow rich as the landlord himself; seeing that as he becomes rich he becomes a man of consequence in the county, and that not only esquires, but even lords, take notice of him at the approach of a general election. He is a wholesale farmer,

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and will breed but few of the animals of the farm-yard, and those only for his own family consumption. His children are too proud to carry the production of the hen-roost or dairy to the market. He scorns such little gains. He deals only in a great way; and keeps up the price by withholding his stores when the market is low. The neighbouring rustics, who used to be respectable, though little farmers, are now his day-labourers, begging to be employed by the great man who has engrossed and consolidated half a dozen farms. The old farm-houses are pulled down. One capital mansion is sufficient for a large territory of meadow and arable land, which used to display smoking chimnies in every part of a cheerful landscape, with a healthy progeny of children, and tribes of animals, enlivening the happy scene. The tenant now reigns over the uninhabited glebe a solitary despot; and something of the ancient vassalage of the feudal system is restored, through the necessities of the surrounding cottagers, who live in hovels with windows stopt up, hardly enjoying God's freest gifts, light and air. A murmur will exclude them even from the hut, compared with which the neighbouring dog-kennel is a palace.

The little tenants of former times were too numerous and too inconsiderable to become objects of corruption. But the great tenant, the engrosser of farms, feeling his consequence, grows as ambitious as his landlord. He may have sons, cousins, and nephews, whom he wishes to provide for by places; and therefore it becomes a part of his prudential plan, to side, in all county elections, and at all public meetings, with the court party, and the aristocratical toad-eaters of the minister.

In like manner, the great manufacturer, finding that riches tend to civil honours and political conse-

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quence, as well as to plenty of all good things, cannot be contented with the slow progress of his grandfathers, but must whip and spur, in his career from the temple of Plutus to the temple of Honour. His workmen therefore, are paid, not by the day, in which case they would endeavour to do their work well, though slowly, but by the piece. The public, perhaps, must of necessity purchase his commodity, however bad; and it is probably as good as others fabricate, because all are pursuing the same glorious end, by similar means. The materials, as well as the workmanship, are of inferior quality. For, the great monopolizers and dealers can force a trade, and get vent among the little retailers, by giving credit, and by various other contrivances, for the most ordinary ware. The great man, whose forefathers felt little else but avarice, now burns with ambition; and, as the honours he seeks are bestowed by ministerial favour, he must be devoted to the minister, and carry all the little traders and artisans to second the views of a court at the general election, or at public meetings, appointed for the promotion of a minister's project to keep himself in place.

These, and a thousand similar causes, visible enough in the various departments of manufacture, commerce, agriculture, are at this moment urging on the great machine of corruption, and diffusing the spirit of despotism. The revolution of France will indeed ultimately check it, throughout Europe, by the influence of principles, favourable to the freedom and happiness of man; but at present, even that event is used by short-sighted politicians, to increase aristocratical arrogance, to depress popular spirit, and to give unnatural influence to the possession of money, however acquired and however abused.

An indignant writer of ancient Rome exclaims:

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Nullum crimen abest, facinusque libidinis ex quo
Paupertas Romana perit.* JUVENAL.
Prima peregrinos obscœna pecunia mores,
Intulit et turpi fregerunt secula luxu,
Divitiæ molles.———

The virtuous ancients, by the light of nature and the evidence of experience, were taught that, when riches obtained a value and esteem beyond their proper use, merely for the sake of splendour, ostentation, and aristocratic oppression, a fatal blow was given to liberty. The human race, they thought, degenerated under the despotism of money. In such a corrupt system there was no encouragement given in the state to excel in virtue for its own sake: even generals and admirals went on expeditions, not even for false and vain glory, far less from motives of patriotism; but to fill their coffers with plunder, and render war a cloak for pillage.

Cauponantes bellum, non belligerentes.

They made a trade, and a sordid trade, of legal bloodshed, not conducting it with the disinterested spirit of soldiers, animated with the love of their country, but with the cunning and avarice of Jew usurers in Duke's Place.

And have we had no instances of generals or admirals making war a trade in recent times, and in Christian nations; using the sword, to which the idea of honour has been attached, as an implement of lucre, and rendering it far less honourable than the knife of the butcher, exercising his trade in the market of Leadenhall? If it should ever be true, that ships of war are made merchantmen in the vilest

* Since Poverty, our guardian god, is gone,
Pride, laziness, and all luxurious arts,
Pour like a deluge in from foreign parts,† &c.
DRYDEN.

† Viz. The East Indies at present.

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merchandise, the barter of human blood for gold, will it not prove, that the attaching honour to the possession of money, is destroying, not only the national virtue, but its honour and defence? Have towns in the East Indies never been given up to plunder, contrary to the law of nations as well as justice and humanity, to make the fortune of European officers?

It is a noble and virtuous struggle, to stand up in defence of the rights of nature, true honour, liberty, and truth, against the overbearing dominion of pecuniary influence. Man will shine forth in his genuine lustre, when money can no longer gild the base metal of folly, knavery, pride, and cruelty. While the corrupt Ganges flows into the Thames, it will contaminate its waters, and infect the atmosphere of freedom. When British freeholders, yeomen, merchants, manufacturers, generals, admirals, and senators, become slaves to pelf only, forgetting or despising the very name of public virtue and disinterested exertion, nothing can oppose the spirit of despotism but the spirit of the people. That spirit, indeed, may at once rescue human nature from misery, and perpetuate the blessings of a pure and free constitution. But if ever a few worthless individuals should be permitted to domineer by the influence of their ill-gotten money, over free countries, to command majorities at elections, and drive all opposition before them, what chance of happiness could remain to virtuous independence? What, in such circumstances, could preserve liberty, but a convulsive struggle, attended, perhaps, with the horrors of the first French revolution, which God, in his mercy, avert!

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## SECTION XXXVII.

*On the natural Tendency of making Judges and Crown Lawyers, Peers; of translating Bishops and annexing Preferments to Bishoprics, in, what is called Commendam.*

If there is any part of the constitution of England, in the praise of which eloquence may employ her most glowing colours, without entrenching upon the confines of truth, it is the judicial part of it. The purity of public justice in England is unequalled in any country which the sun illuminates in his diurnal progress. The reason is obvious. The verdict is given by juries of men usually beyond the reach of corruption. No ministerial influence can descend to all the individuals, in middle and humble life, who may be called upon to sit in judgment, and ultimately decide, as jurors, on the property, the fame, and the life, of their fellow-citizens. We have lately had a most glorious instance of the virtue of private citizens, exercising this most important office. The verdicts given in the state trials, in one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four, do more honour to the British character, than all the military exploits in the reign of George the Third. Such verdicts make our constitution truly enviable to the nations of Europe. Twelve honest men, on each of these trials, proved to the world, that no power, no authority, no terror, not even the factitious rage of aristocratical principles, which had been artfully fostered, could lead them to swerve from the right line of justice. They feared God, but not man; and posterity will honour them, when the names of subtle politicians, clothed with a brief but lucrative authority, if mentioned at all, shall be mentioned with detestation. It was well

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observed by a zealous and honest advocate on the occasion, that he could not despair of the case, when it was brought from the corrupt to the uncorrupt part of the constitution. The days of acquittal were the jubilees of truth, the triumphs of virtue; and, in a time of dejection, revived the hopes of patriotism and philanthropy.

Official judges, not having the final determination of the cause, but feeling the check of the juries, commonly conduct themselves, even in state trials, with some degree of candour and moderation. Indeed, we are so happy as to see men appointed to this office, in our time, whose tried integrity gives reason to believe, that, if they were not thus wisely checked, they would, with few exceptions, preserve impartiality.

Nevertheless, though much has been said on the independence of judges, yet it must be confessed, that there still remain temptations, which might have great influence on men less virtuous than our present judges are. It is observed, that peerages, in modern times, have been bestowed, with peculiar bounty, on lawyers, and that puisne judges have frequently been made chiefs; and some have ventured to say, that the expectation of these splendid rewards may frustrate all endeavours to secure, especially in state trials, perfect independence. It is not enough that judges do not fear removal from their dignified office. Their hopes may influence, more than their fears. They may look forward to increased opulence, an extensive patronage, the dignity of family distinction, and hereditary seats in the legislature. If themselves have seen too much of the vanity and folly of worldly pomp to admire it, (which, however, is not often the case with men who may be great lawyers, without any philosophy or religion,) yet they may have sons,

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wives, daughters, relatives, and friends, to whom the splendour of life, (as they have, possibly, little solid merit,) is valuable in the highest degree. Promotion is therefore, for the most part, a very powerful allurement, I will not say, to disguise the truth or pervert the law, but obsequiously to seek ministerial favour.

When peerages are lavished on lawyers high in place, and judges advanced, they are circumstances viewed with some degree of jealousy by those who are willing to guard constitutional liberty with unwinking vigilance. Perhaps it might afford satisfaction to such men, if judges were by law excluded from all higher elevation; if they were indeed most amply paid and most respectfully revered; but, for the sake of preventing the possibility of a wrong bias, where the happiness of the people is most intimately concerned, were prevented from viewing a brilliant dazzling coronet, suspended as their reward, over the scales of justice.

But here an objector will urge, with serious solicitude, that, as the house of lords is a court of judicature, in the last resort, a court of appeal from every court in the kingdom, it is necessary that it should be well supplied with lawyers of eminence.

On this subject Paley says; "There appears to be nothing in the constitution of the house of lords; in the education, habits, character, or professions of the members who compose it; in the mode of their appointment, or the right by which they succeed to their places in it, that should qualify them for their arduous office; except, perhaps, that the elevation of their rank and fortune affords a security against the offer and influence of small bribes. Officers of the army and navy, courtiers, ecclesiastics; young men who have just attained the age of twenty-one,

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and who have passed their youth in the dissipation and pursuits which commonly accompany the possession or inheritance of great fortunes; country gentlemen, occupied in the management of their estates, or in the care of their domestic concerns and family interests; the greater part of the assembly born to their station, that is, placed in it by chance; most of the rest advanced to the peerage for services and from motives utterly unconnected with legal erudition;—these men compose the tribunal to which the constitution intrusts the interpretation of her laws, and the ultimate decision of every dispute between her subjects!"

From this very degrading representation of the house of lords, the writer proceeds to justify the practice of constantly placing in it, some of the most eminent and experienced lawyers in the kingdom. He would, I think, with more propriety have argued against rendering one part of the legislature a court of justice, designed both to make and execute the laws; because every solid politician has agreed in the propriety of keeping the legislative and judicial powers as separate and as distinct from each other as it is possible.

I leave this point for the discussion of future political writers, and satisfy myself with suggesting that it is necessary to the perfect contentment of a people jealous of their liberty and the purity of judicial proceedings, that all temptations whatever should be removed from the sight of frail human beings, sitting in the seat of judgment, which may lead them to court the favour of ruling powers at the expense of justice. It is not money alone which bribes. Title, rank, and patronage, which is power in its most agreeable form, have more influence on the universal passion, vanity; especially when avarice has been

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already gratified with ample salaries and the emoluments of a lucrative profession.

The consideration of the possible rewards which may diminish the independence of judges, naturally leads to the consideration of those which may secularize the bishops, and injure the cause of religion, for which alone episcopacy itself could be established.

But, as this is a subject of some delicacy, I shall use the authority and words of Dr. Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, who ventured to speak the whole truth, with that sound sense, which was his characteristic, and with that freedom which becomes an honest man in every rank, and is particularly expected from a Christian bishop.

"I know," says the Bishop, "that many will be startled, I beg them not to be offended, at the surmise of the bishops not being independent in the house of lords; and it would be easy enough to weave a logical cobweb, large enough and strong enough to cover and protect the conduct of the Right Reverend Bench from the attacks of those who dislike episcopacy. This, I say, would be an easy task; but it is far above my ability to eradicate from the minds of others (who are, notwithstanding, as well attached to the church establishment as ourselves,) a suspicion that the prospect of being translated influences the minds of the bishops too powerfully, and induces them to pay too great an attention to the beck of a minister. The suspicion, whether well or ill founded, is disreputable to our order; and, what is of worse consequence, it hinders us from doing that good which we otherwise might do; for the laity, while they entertain such a suspicion concerning us, will accuse us of avarice and ambition, of



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making a gain of godliness, of bartering the dignity of our office for the chance of a translation.

"Instead then," proceeds the Bishop, "of quibbling and disputing against the existence of ministers influence over us, or recriminating and retorting the petulance of those who accuse us on that account, let us endeavour to remove the evil; or, if it must not be admitted that this evil has any real existence, let us endeavour to remove the appearance of it.

"The disparity of income and patronage might be made so small, or so apportioned to the labours, that few bishops would be disposed to wish for translations; and consequently the bishops would, in appearance as well as in reality, be independent.

"But, in rendering the bishops independent, you will reduce the power of the crown in the house of lords.—I do not mean to deny this charge; nay, I am willing to admit it in its full extent.—The influence of the crown, when exerted by the cabinet over the public counsellors of the king, is a circumstance so far from being to be wished by his true friends, that it is as dangerous to the real interests and honour of the crown itself, as it is odious to the people, and destructive of public liberty.

"It may contribute to keep a prime minister in his place, contrary to the sense of the wisest and best part of the community; it may contribute to keep the king himself unacquainted with his people's wishes, but it cannot do the king or the state any service. To maintain the contrary is to satirise his majesty's government; it is to insinuate, that his views and interests are so disjoined from those of his people, that they cannot be effectuated by the uninfluenced concurrence of honest men.

"I cannot admit the circumstance of the bishops

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being rendered independent in the house of lords, as any real objection to the plan proposed; on the contrary, I think it a very strong argument in its favour; so strong an one that, if there was no other, it would be sufficient to sanctify the measure."

The corruption of the church for the purpose of corrupting the legislature, is an offence far more injurious to the general happiness of mankind and the interests of a Christian community, than any of those which have banished the offenders to Botany Bay, or confined them for years within the walls of the prison-house. Both the corruptors and the corrupted, in this case, are more injurious to Christianity than all the tribe of sceptics and infidels; than Tindal, Toland, Bolingbroke, Hume, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Gibbon. The common people do not read them, and perhaps could scarcely understand them. But the common people do read the newspapers daily, and see the names and qualities of those who divide in the senate-house, on questions of the last importance. They must therefore entertain a suspicion, as the Bishop of Llandaff expresses it, that religion itself, as well as its official, opulent, dignified supporters, is but an instrument of state, a tool in the hand of a minister. They must naturally consider venality as doubly base, when clothed in the sanctified robes of religion. What has happened in France, in consequence of the corruptions of the church by the state, ought to afford a striking admonition.

I wish to point out, in these times, writings of living bishops in favour of Christianity, because they would be opposed with the best grace against the writings of living infidels. But, to the reproach of my want of intelligence, I know not the names of the majority, till I find them in the Court Calendar,



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The printed works of even this majority I cannot find, either in the shops or the libraries: the few I do find, even of the minority, are not adapted to the wants of the people at large. Their occasional sermons, after they have served their day, become, like almanacs, out of date: a collection of old court calendars would be nearly as edifying and more entertaining to the multitude.

It is indeed certain, that the archiepiscopal mitres received more lustre than they gave, from the sermons of Dr. Tillotson and Dr. Secker. It would give me pleasure to place the sermons of living archbishops by their side; and I would mention them had they come to my knowledge. The sermons, however, of the few living bishops who are known at all to the public will, I hope, prove to mankind, that some among the bishops, in this happy isle, do not think it a sufficient return for princely revenues, to vote always with a minister, or to increase, with lawn sleeves, the pageantry of a birthday. To perform the occasional duties of ordination, confirmation, and visitation, cannot satisfy the minds of men who receive the honours and emoluments of Durham, Winchester, York, or Canterbury. That it is so, is happy; for if ever the prelatical clergy should be suspected of becoming merely ministerial instruments; if, for instance, they should ever be supposed so far secularized, as to concede to the minister that made them bishops, the right of nominating to all the most valuable preferments in their gift, in order to enable him the better to corrupt that parliament in which themselves also have engaged to give a venal vote; from that time, they would contribute more to the downfal of the church, than all the writings of all the unbelievers, from Frederick, late King of Prussia, to the repub-

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lican, Thomas Paine. The sin of simony in a private man, who pays a fair price for a profitable appointment, with his own money, honestly earned by virtuous industry, and does the duties of it, is as nothing when compared to the simony of him who buys a high and important station, greatly lucrative, with a corrupt vote and a base dereliction of those rights of patronage, which were intended to encourage merit only, and to prevent that very corruption which he feeds and cherishes, to gratify his own sordid avarice and childish vanity.

The bishops, in their charges, are sounding an alarm. They very justly affirm, that the existence of Christianity is now in danger. They wisely urge the inferior clergy to the most vigilant activity. Thus far they certainly do honour to the episcopal function. But still, while the public suspects the bare possibility of the bench being, as Bishop Watson says, at the beck of the minister, they will consider all this zeal as little better than that of Demetrius, who made silver shrines for Diana.

When indeed we add to the probable effect of translations from a poorer to a richer bishopric, the holding of rich pluralities with bishoprics, under the name of commendams, it is difficult not to think with Bishop Watson, that episcopal independence is endangered, and that we must look rather in cathedrals, than in the house of lords, for episcopal integrity. Conscientious dissenters are shocked, and libertines and infidels laugh, when they view the bench, as if they were spectators of a solemn mummery, or a mock-heroic farce. All this danger, offence, and reproach, might possibly be prevented, if translations and commendams were utterly prohibited.

But, setting aside the effect of translations and

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commendams on the state of religion, let us seriously consider them as they operate on the increase of prerogative and the spirit of despotism. These things influence not only those who have attained mitres, but a numerous tribe of expectants; and those expectants possess the ear of the people. Is it reasonable to suppose that the doctrines of the pulpit will not, under these circumstances, be fashioned to the inclinations of the minister? What can contribute more to diffuse the spirit of despotism, than the employment of many thousand pulpits, at least once in each week, in obliquely preaching doctrines, that favour its prevalence, under the sanction of divine authority?

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## SECTION XXXVIII.

*That all Opposition to the Spirit of Despotism should be conducted with the most scrupulous Regard to the existing Laws, and to the Preservation of public Peace and good Order.*

The frailty of human nature is one of the commonest of common-places. The wisest and best of men are desirous of palliating their errors, by claiming a share, as men, in human infirmity. One of the infirmities most acknowledged and lamented is a tendency to rush from one extreme to another; a proneness to fall into a vice, in the desire of escaping an error. Thus the detestation of despotism, and the love of liberty, both of them rational and laudable, have led many to factious and violent conduct, which neither the occasion justified, nor prudence would precipitately adopt, even if the occasion might appear to justify them.

From faction and violence in the cause of liberty, which disgrace the cause itself, and give advantage

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to the favourers of arbitrary power, I most anxiously dissuade all who love mankind and their country. Faction and violence are despotic in the extreme. They bring all the evils of tyranny, without any consolation, but that they are usually transient; whereas tyranny is durable. They destroy themselves, or are destroyed by force in the hands of a superior power. In either case, much is lost to the cause of liberty; because the persons who have been betrayed by their passions into excesses, were probably sincere; and if they had been also discreet and moderate, would have been effectual as well as zealous promoters of public good. It is certain, that very honest men are very apt to be betrayed into violence by their warmth of temper. They mean good, and do ill. They become the instruments of dispassionate knaves; and are often led into extravagances by the very party against whom they act, in order that they may be exposed, and become obnoxious to censure.

Wisdom is gentle, deliberate, cautious. Nothing violent is durable. I hope the lovers of liberty will show the sincerity of their attachment by the wisdom of their conduct. Tumultuary proceedings always exhibit some appearance of insanity. A blow struck with blind violence may inflict a wound or a bruise, but it may fall in the wrong place: it may even injure the hand that gives it, by its own ill-directed force.

Man being a reasonable creature, will always submit to reason, if you give time for his passions to cool, and wait for the *mollia tempora fandi*, the proper opportunities of addressing him. A few, in the great mass of mankind, may be corrupted by views of interest, by expectations of preferment, by bribes, and by titles. But there are not rewards enough of this kind to corrupt the whole body of any

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people. The great body of the people will follow that which appears to them right, and just, and true. Let it be clearly laid before them, and left for their calm consideration. If it should so happen, which is very unlikely, that they should not adopt it, after understanding it, and duly weighing its importance, then they must be left to the error of their ways. *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur.* If the people will be deluded, they must be so. Force cannot eradicate error, though it may destroy life. Riot, tumult, turbulence may do great mischief, but they carry no conviction.

Inflammatory language at popular meetings is to be avoided; and indeed multitudes of the lowest of the people are not to be wantonly convened. Without in the least impeaching their rights, it must be allowed that their passions are too violent when heated by collision with each other, and their judgments too weak, when not previously informed by reading and education, to act wisely when met in a large body, without authorized guides, and without strict regulation. A man who is a sincere patriot, and not a mere demagogue for sinister purposes, will be cautious of assembling crowds of the lowest of the people. Lord George Gordon's unfortunate conduct has left a lasting lesson. He, I firmly believe, intended none of that mischief which ensued; but who can say to the waves of a troubled sea, "thus far shall ye go, and no farther?" I know, and have already commented on, the advantage taken from those riots by the friends of high-prerogative doctrines, for disparaging the people at large, notwithstanding the people certainly had no concern in them.

Though decidedly a friend to the reform of the house of commons, I cannot agree with the Duke of

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Richmond in the propriety of universal suffrage. I think his idea full of mischief and indeed perfectly Utopian. Sir Thomas More never wrote any thing more visionary in his celebrated fiction; Sir Robert Filmer nothing more adverse to real liberty. Universal suffrage, I fear, would cause universal confusion; and the friends of mankind would be inclined to fly for temporary refuge even to the throne of a despot. Persons in a state of servitude could never be expected to give a free vote; and vagabonds and paupers would use their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. I wish the right of suffrage to be extended as far as it possibly can, without endangering public order and tranquillity; but extreme ignorance and extreme penury cannot with prudence be trusted with a power which both requires knowledge and commands property.

But whatever politicians may determine upon this point, I think it certain, that debates upon it cannot be held in very large assemblies, into which, not only the lowest but the vilest of mankind are allowed admission, and all the privileges of counsellors, *de summa rerum*, on matters of the highest importance, without extreme danger of violating law, and disturbing that order which is necessary to comfort and security.

I wish, therefore, that all preliminary consultation on this point, and all points like this, may be conducted by writing, by appeals to reason in the closet, and that a considerable time may be allowed to cool all intemperate heats; and give solidity to the materials of the intended repair. At county meetings or associations, I would have the civil power in full force; but never the military. The staff of the constable should be more coercive than the sabre of the dragoon; for the constitution admits the one as its own,

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but certainly looks at the other with horror. Every tumult, productive of mischief, gives the friends of arbitrary power an opportunity for introducing the military, of arguing against all popular interference in that very government which the people support by their industry, and which, according to the law of God, nature, and reason, in extremities they have a right to controul by their supreme authority. There may be cases of the last necessity, which I shudder to think of, in which nothing but the power of the people, acting by force, can maintain or recover their usurped rights. Such must occur but seldom. May our country never experience them!

There can be no good reason assigned why government should not be, like every thing else, continually advancing to all the perfection of which it is capable. Indeed, as the happiness of mankind depends more upon well-regulated and well-administered government, than on any thing subordinate in life or in arts; there is every reason for bestowing all the time which every passing generation can bestow, in bringing government to its utmost point of attainable perfection. It is the business and the duty of those who now live, as they value their own happiness and the happiness of their posterity, to labour in the reform of abuses, and the farther improvement of every improveable advantage. Would any man be listened to with patience, who should say, that any useful art or manufacture ought not to be improved by ingenious projectors, because it does tolerably in its present state, satisfies those who are ignorant of the excellence of which it is susceptible, and cannot be altered, even for the better, without causing some trouble, for a time, among those who have been accustomed to the present imperfect and erroneous methods of

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conducting it? No; encouragements are held out for improvement in all arts and sciences, conducive to the comfort and accommodation of human life. What, then, in the first art, the art of diffusing happiness throughout nations, shall he who attempts improvement be stigmatized as an innovator, prosecuted as a seditious intermeddler, and persecuted with the resentment of those who find their advantage in the continuance of error, and the diffusion of abuse and corruption? However courtiers may patronize silly establishments, which claim a prescriptive right to folly, inutility, and even mischievous consequences, the common sense of mankind will revolt against them, join in demanding reform, and in saying of old customs, when become nuisances by alteration of circumstances, that instead of being sanctified by long duration, they are now more honoured in the breach than the observance.

But let the reformation be gentle, though firm; wise, though bold; lenient to persons erring, though severe against error. Let her not alarm the friend of liberty by sudden violence, but invite all to the cause of truth and justice, by showing that she is herself guarded, not only by truth and justice, but by mercy. Let us show ourselves, in seeking political reformation, what we profess to be, a nation of Christians, if not philosophers; and let not a groan be heard amid the acclamations of triumphant liberty, nor one drop of blood sadden the glorious victory of philosophy and Christianity over pride.

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## SECTION XXXIX.

*The Christian Religion favourable to Civil Liberty, and likewise to Equality rightly understood.*

You seldom meet with infidelity in a cottage. You find evil and misery there, as in palaces; but you do not find infidelity. The poor love the name and religion of Jesus Christ. And they have reason to love them, if they only considered the obligations they are under to them for worldly comfort, for liberty, for instruction, for a due consideration in civil society.

The rights of man, to mention which is almost criminal in the eyes of despotical sycophants, are plainly and irresistibly established in the gospel. There is no doubt but that all his creatures are dear to the Creator and Redeemer; but yet, from motives of mercy and compassion, there is an evident predilection for the poor, manifested in our Saviour's preaching and ministry. These are very striking words; "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." The instruction, the consolation, the enlightening of the poor, are placed with the greatest of his miracles, the resuscitation of extinguished life. Who, indeed, did trouble themselves to care for the poor, till Jesus Christ set the glorious example? It was a miraculous thing, in the eye of the world, that a divine teacher should address himself particularly to those who could not reward him with a worldly recompence. But he came to destroy that inequality among mankind, which enabled the rich and great to treat the poor as beasts of burden.

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He himself chose the condition of poverty, to show the rich and proud of how little estimation are the trifles they doat upon, in the eye of him who made them, and who can destroy them at his pleasure.

Let us hear him open his divine commission. The words are very comfortable, especially after reading the histories of the tyrants who have bruised mankind with their rods of iron. We find them in the fourth chapter of St. Luke.

"And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias; and when he had opened the book, he found the place wherein it was written:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised;

"To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

"And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down, and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

"And he began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears.

"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"

—And soon after, "All they in the synagogue were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, (whereon their city was built,) that they might cast him down headlong."

Thus their aristocratical prejudices prevailed over the first strong feelings of gratitude and grace. The spirit of aristocracy displayed itself here in its genuine colours; in pride, cruelty, and violence. Many of the scribes (the lawyers) and pharisees were pro-

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bably in the synagogue, and their influence soon prevailed on the people to show their impotent malice against their best friend and benefactor. In all ages, something of the same kind is observable. The proud supporters of tyranny, in which they hope to partake, have always used false alarms, false plots, cunningly-contrived nicknames and watchwords, to set the unthinking people against those who were promoting their greatest good.

When Christ began to preach, we read, in the seventh chapter of St. Luke, that the multitude and the publicans heard him; but the scribes and the pharisees rejected the counsel of God towards them. They, like all persons of similar temper and rank, flourishing by abuses, could not bear innovation.

The most powerful argument they used against him was this question:——Have any of the rulers and the pharisees believed in him? In modern times the question would have been, Have any persons of fashion and distinction given countenance to him? Does my lord—or my lady—or Sir Harry go to hear him preach?—Or is he somebody whom nobody knows?—Such is the language of the spirit of despotism, in all times and countries.

Three hundred years elapsed, in consequence of these prejudices, before the gospel was recognised and received at court. And I am sorry to say that the court soon corrupted its simplicity. The pride of life, always prevalent among those who assume to themselves good things enough to support and comfort thousands of individuals equally deserving, could never brook the doctrines of Christ, which favoured liberty and equality. It therefore seduced the Christians to a participation of power and grandeur; and the poor, with their rights, were often forgotten, in the most splendid periods of ecclesiastical prosperity.

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Many nominal Christians have been and are as aristocratical as Herod and the chief priests and pharisees of Judea.

But the authority of Jesus Christ himself must have more weight with Christians, than all the pomp and parade of the most absolute despots in Europe, at the head of the finest troops in the universe. He taught us, when we pray, to say, *Our* Father. This alone is sufficient to establish, on an immovable basis, the equality of human beings. All are bound to call upon and consider God as their Father, if they are Christians; and, as there are no rights of primogeniture in Heaven, all are equal brothers and sisters, coheirs, if they do not forfeit their hopes, of a blessed immortality. But these are doctrines which the great and proud cannot admit. This world is theirs, and they cannot bear that the beggar, the servant, the slave, should be their equal. We can hardly suppose, in imagination, the Empress of Russia, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Germany, or any grandee with a riband, a garter, or a star, kneeling down, and from his heart acknowledging, in his prayer, a poor private in a marching regiment, a poor wretch in a workhouse, or the servant that rides behind his carriage, a brother. So void of reason and religion is a poor helpless mortal, when drest in a little brief authority by the folly of those who submit to be trampled under foot by their equal; a man born of a woman, like themselves, and, doomed, like themselves, after strutting on the stage a few years, to the grave. Our Saviour, with a wisdom far above all the refinement of philosophy, frequently inculcated the vanity of riches and power, and the real preeminence of virtue.

And what say the apostles? Do they favour those who usurp an unnatural and unreasonable power

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over their fellow-mortals, for the sake of gratifying their own selfish vanity and avarice? Let us hear them.

St. Paul, in the first chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, says, "You see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, (worldly-wise men,) not many mighty, not many noble are called."

In the second chapter of the Epistle of St. James, we read.

"Has not God chosen the poor of this world to be heirs of his kingdom?" To which is added,

"The rich men blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called."

These passages afford a very strong argument of the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, for they contain the very doctrines which were foretold several hundred years before the appearance of Christianity. Isaiah, in his twenty-ninth chapter, speaking of the gospel, and its doctrines and effects, expressly says,

"The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord; and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel."

The inference I would draw from all that has preceded, is, that the middle ranks and the poor, that is, the great majority of mankind, should place a due value on the gospel, not only for its religious, but also its civil and political advantages. It is the grand charter of their freedom, their independence, their equality. All the subtilty of lawyers, all the sophistry of ministerial orators, all the power of all the despots and aristocrats in the world, cannot annihilate rights, given, indeed, by Nature, but plainly confirmed by the Gospel. The words already cited are too clear and explicit to admit of misconstruction.

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Jesus Christ came to put an end to unjust inequality in this world, while he revealed the prospect of another, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. O ye people, give not the tyrants such an advantage as to part with your gospel. Preserve it, watch over it, as the pearl of great price. It is your security for present and future felicity. Other Herods, other Neroes may arise, who will rejoice to see you voluntarily renounce a system which militates against their diabolical rule; rejoice to see you give up that which all the persecution of the ancient Herods and Neroes in vain attempted to abolish by shedding blood.

I think it may be depended on as indisputable, that men who endeavour to suppress all works in favour of truth,* liberty, and the happiness of the middle and poor classes of the people, would, if they had lived about one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five years ago, have joined with the high priests and rulers to crucify Jesus Christ. They would have prosecuted and persecuted him for sedition and high treason. They would have despised and rejected the friend of Lazarus; and taken the part of Dives, even in hell. The spirit of pride is of the devil, and those who are actuated by that spirit, in all their conduct, would have fallen down and worshipped him, if he would have put them on the pinnacle of the temple, and promised them the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.

* "That make a man an offender for a word." Isaiah, xxix. 21.



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## SECTION XL.

*The Pride which produces the Spirit of Despotism conspicuous even on the Tombstone. It might be treated with total Neglect, if it did not tend to the Oppression of the Poor, and to Bloodshed and Plunder.*

DEATH is the great teacher and censor of human vanity; but even death cannot repress the pride of aristocracy, or the insolence of riches, endeavouring to make wealth and grandeur triumph over the law of nature, and outshine others even from the coffin and the grave. If we look into the churches and church-yards, we see the most insignificant of mankind honoured with the most magnificent monuments of marble, the proudest trophies, sculptured urns, a flattering inscription, and a gilded lie. The walls of the sanctuary are hung with banners, escutcheons, helmets, and spurs; which display the emptiness of that preeminence which they are intended to emblazon. The poor body, which all this paint and finery attends, lies mouldering in the vault; and give it but a tongue to speak, would exclaim, at the gaudy sight, "Vanity of vanities! Mock not my humiliated condition with the contemptible pageantry that misguided my feet from the path of reason and happiness, during my mortal existence." The only means of being honourably distinguished, is to promote most effectually the general happiness of human nature, and to seek private good in public beneficence.

The spirit of despotism is remarkably visible in the mausoleum. There are families who seem to think that their precious bones would be contaminated, even if deposited in the consecrated cemeteries of the church, where plebeians sleep; and therefore they erect proud temples in their private

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domains, where their fathers may rot in state, unapproached by the vulgar. If they were illustrious inventors of arts and benefactors to mankind, the distinction might be a just compliment to their memory, and a useful incentive to emulation. But the persons thus magnificently interred, are usually the most insignificant of the human race; whose very names would not be known a year after their decease, if they were not deeply engraven on the marble.

Many a citizen, notorious for the meanest avarice, as little distinguished for beneficence as abilities, is decorated with the most sumptuous memorials which the stone-cutter can raise for money; while Milton, the glory of the nation, a man elevated above the rank of common humanity, had no monumental marble. But all that the herald's office can effect, all that can be done by painting, gilding, and marble, cannot ennoble the greatest favourite of a court, the most successful adventurer in the East Indies, or the most opulent contractor and money-lender, like a Paradise Lost. The nabobs find their influence cannot secure the esteem of a few contemporaries, though it may command their votes, much less of whole nations, and of late posterity. Money, the only god which worldlings worship, loses its omnipotence after the death of its possessor; and even the inheritor often despises the man who acquired it. The undertaker, the escutcheon painter, and the sculptor, are however employed to keep up the false pageantry of insignificant opulence; and a hearse, covered over with coats of arms, is used for the purpose of impressing the vulgar with a veneration for rank and riches, while, in the minds of men of sense, it excites ridicule, and converts a funeral into a farce.

Indeed the empty parade of pride, and the self-importance of despotism itself, might furnish a laugh-



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able entertainment, if it were not productive of mischief, misery, and bloodshed. To support the vanity, exclusive privileges, and high pretensions of those who have little personal merit or services to recommend them to society, it is necessary to have recourse to military force and corruption. A system of terror and coercion can alone keep down the people, and compel a tame acquiescence under usurped power, abused for the purposes of oppression.

Standing armies are therefore the glory and delight of all who are actuated by the spirit of despotism. They would have no great objection to military government and martial law, while power is in their own hands, or in the hands of their patrons. The implicit submission of an army, the doctrine, which the military system favours, that men in subaltern stations are to act as they are bidden, and never to deliberate on the propriety of the command, is perfectly congenial with the spirit of despotism. The glitter, the pomp, the parade and ostentation of war are also highly pleasing to minds that prefer splendour and pageantry to solid and substantial comfort. The happiness, which must ever depend on the tranquillity of the people, is little regarded, when set in competition with the gratification of personal vanity. Plumes, lace, shining arms, and other habiliments of war, set off the person to great advantage; and as to the wretches who are slain or wounded, plunged into captivity and disease, in order to support this finery, are they not paid for it? Besides, they are, for the most part, in the lowest class, and those whom nobody knows.

Such is the love of standing armies, in some countries, that attempts are made to render even the national militia little different from a standing army. This circumstance alone is a symptom of the spirit

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of despotism. A militia of mercenary substitutes, under officers entirely devoted to a minister, must add greatly to a standing army, from which, in fact, it would differ only in name. Should the people be entirely disarmed, and scarcely a musket and bayonet in the country but under the management of a minister, through the agency of servile lords lieutenant and venal magistrates, what defence would remain, in extremities, either for the king or the people?

The love of pomp and finery, though ridiculous in itself, may thus become injurious to liberty, and therefore to happiness, by increasing the military order in the time of peace, and when ministerial arts have contributed to render that order devoted to purposes of selfish aggrandizement or borough influence. Minds capable of being captivated with the silly parade of war, are of too soft a texture to grasp the manly principles of true patriotism. They will usually prefer the favour of a court, which has many shining ornaments to bestow, to the esteem of a people. A heart deeply infected with the spirit of despotism, despises the people too much to be in the least solicitous to obtain popular applause. Praise is but breath; and often, like the wind, veers about inconstantly; and certainly will desert a man who has deserted the virtuous and benevolent conduct which first excited it. But ribands, stars, garters, places, pensions, usually last for life; and titles descend to the latest posterity. Honour, once gained by royal smiles, is a part of the family goods and chattels, and goes down, from generation to generation, without requiring, to the day of doom, any painful exertion, any meritorious services, but leaving its happy possessors to the free enjoyment of idleness and luxury. No wonder, therefore, that where the

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selfish spirit of despotism prevails, a bauble bestowed by a court shall outweigh a whole people's plaudits. A coat of arms makes a figure on the escutcheon and the tombstone; but not a scrap of gilded and painted silk—not even a bloody hand, can be bestowed by the most cordial esteem of the low multitude.

Heraldry itself, though a childish, is a harmless vanity; but, as conducing very much to the spirit of despotism, it becomes not only ridiculous, but pernicious. It makes a distinction, on which men plume themselves, without merit and without services. Satisfied with such a distinction, they will be less inclined to acquire merit and to render services. They can inherit a coat of arms; or they can buy one; or, which is more compendious still, they can borrow or invent one. It is enough that they are separated from the canaille. The coach, the hall, the church, is crowded with their achievements; there is no occasion for arduous exertion. They are now raised above the vulgar. The work is done. Their name is up; they may slumber in the repose of useless insignificance, or move in the restlessness of mischievous activity. The coat of arms is at once a shield for folly, and a banner in the triumph of pride.

But both pride and folly should be permitted for me to enjoy their baubles unmolested, if they did not lead to cruelty. But pride and folly are the causes of war; therefore I hate them from my soul. They glory in destruction; and among the most frequent ornaments, even of our churches, (the very houses of peace,) are hung up on high trophies of war. Dead men (themselves subdued by the universal conqueror) are represented, by their surviving friends, as rejoicing, even in their graves, in the implements of manslaughter. Helmets, swords, and blood-

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stained flags hang over the grave, together with the escutcheons and marble monuments, emblematical of human ferocity; of those actions and passions which Christianity repudiates; for as well might oil and vinegar coalesce, as war and Christianity.

Spirit of despotism! I would laugh at all thy extravagances, thy solemn mummery, thy baby baubles, thy airs of insolence, thy finery and frippery, thy impotent insults over virtue, genius, and all personal merit, thy strutting, self-pleasing mien and language! I would consider them all with the eye of a Democritus, as affording a constant farce, an inexhaustible fund of merriment, did they not lead to the malevolent passions, which, in their effects, forge chains for men born free, plunder the poor of their property, and shed the blood of innocence.

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## SECTION XLI.

### CONCLUSION.

To meliorate the condition of human nature can be the only rational end of government. It cannot be designed to favour one description of men, a minority of men, at the expense of all others; who, having received life from him who alone can give it, received at the same time a right to enjoy it in liberty and security. This was the charter of God and nature; which no mortal, however elevated by conquest or inheritance, can annul or violate without impiety. All government which makes not the advancement of human happiness, and the comfort of the individuals who are subject to its controul, the prime purpose of its operations, partakes of des-

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potism: and I have always thought that, in governments which boast of a free constitution, the views, even of statesmen and politicians who espoused the cause of liberty, have sometimes been too circumscribed. They have been attached to names and families. They seem not always to have opened either their eyes or hearts to objects truly great and affections sincerely catholic and philanthropic. I hate to hear public men, who certainly can have no right to their preeminence but for the public good, professing themselves of the party of an individual, and appearing to forget the great mass of the people, the party of human nature. The majority of men are poor and obscure. To them all party attachments to names and families, little known as public benefactors, must appear at once absurd and injurious. They are the persons who stand in most need of protection and assistance from the powerful. The rich, under all governments, have a thousand means of procuring either comfort or defence. It is the mass, the poor and middling ranks, unknown to and unknowing courts or kings, who require all the alleviation which men enlightened by knowledge, furnished with opulence, elevated by rank, can afford to lessen the natural evils of life, aggravated by the moral and artificial. Government possesses the power of alleviating, and sometimes of removing, that moral and physical evil which imbitters existence. How deplorable, when government becomes so perverted as to increase the evil it was designed to cure. Yet this has been, and is now the case on a great part of the globe; insomuch that the learned and judicious Dr. Prideaux, whose integrity is as well known as his ability, used to say, "That it was a doubt with him, whether the benefit which the world receives from government was sufficient to make amends for the calamities which it

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suffers from the follies, mistakes, and mal-administration of those that manage it."

When it is considered how little the most boasted governments have been able or inclined to prevent the greatest calamity of the world, the frequent recurrence of war, it is natural to conclude, that there has been some radical defect or error in all government, hitherto instituted on the face of the earth. Violence may be used where there is no government. Governments pretend to direct human affairs by reason; but war is a dereliction of reason, a renunciation of all that refines and improves human nature, and an appeal to brute force. Man descends from the heights to which philosophers and legislators had raised him in society; takes the sword, and surpasses the beasts of the forest in ferocity. Yet, so far from thinking himself culpable, he deems his destructive employment the most honourable of all human occupations, because governments have politically contrived to throw a glossy mantle, covered with tinsel and spangles, over the horrors of bloodshed and devastation. If governments, with all their riches and power, all their vaunted arts and sciences, all the mysterious policy of cabinets, all the wisdom and eloquence of deliberating senates, are unable to preserve the blessing of peace, uninterrupted, during the short space of twenty years together, they must be dreadfully faulty, either in their constitution or their administration. In what consists the fault? I think in the selfish spirit of despotism, pursuing the sordid or vain-glorious purposes of the governors, with little regard to the real, substantial happiness of the governed. Despotism, in some mode or degree, has transformed the shepherds of the flock into wolves; has appropriated the fleeces, shed the blood of the innoxious animals, torn

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down the fences of the sheepfold, and laid waste the pasture.

Is there a government in the world but our own that has legislated so equitably, as that none to whom existence has been given should want the necessaries of existence; and where helpless age and infirmity, as well as helpless infancy, should find a pillow to repose on, and plenty to nourish it, without supplicating a man, equal by nature, for the cold and scanty relief of eleemosynary charity? The truth is, power gradually engrosses property; and the selfish spirit of despotism is ever striving to appropriate all the good, of every kind, which the earth is able to produce.

National glory, the trappings of a court, the parade of armies, the finery of external appearance, have been the silly objects of state solicitude; while man was left to bewail, in the recesses of want and obscurity, that his mother had brought him into a world of woe, without means of comfort or support, with little other prospect than to labour without ceasing, to fight those who never injured him, and to die prematurely, unknown, and unlamented. All his wretchedness has been aggravated by the insults of unfeeling pride; the neglect of aristocratic grandeur, which, under the spirit of despotism, mocked by the false pageantry of life, those who were doomed to feel its real misery. The vain pomp and glory of the world, held out the finger of scorn to that wretchedness which itself contributed to create, and would not relieve.

Threescore years and ten, and those often full of labour and sorrow, constitute the space allotted to the life of man in a venerable volume, full of beauty as well as instruction, and worthy of great attention independently of the high authority attributed to it

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by the religion established by the laws of this country. Few and evil are our days, even when they proceed to their natural extent, and are attended with the common portion of health and prosperity. Yet, as if a superfluity of years and happiness were lavished on men, the chief business of the greatest part of governments on the whole earth has been to abbreviate life, to poison and imbitter its sweetest pleasures, and add new pungency to its anguish. Yet see the false glitter of happiness, the pomp and parade which such governments assume; observe the gravity and insolence of superiority which their ministers, their statesmen, and their warriors, assume, and you would imagine them a commissioned regency, lord lieutenants sent by heaven to rule this lower world, and to rectify all disorders which had escaped the vigilance of the Deity. The time has been when they have actually claimed the title of God's vicegerents, and have been literally worshipped as gods by the servile crew of courtiers; men gradually bowed down by despotism from the erect port of native dignity, and driven by fear to crouch under the most degrading of all superstition, the political idolatry of a base fellow-creature.

After all the language of court adulation, the praises of poets and orators, the statues and monuments erected to their fame, the malignant consequences of their actions prove them to have been no other than conspirators against the improvement and happiness of the human race. What were their means of conducting their governments, of exercising this office of heaven's vicegerents? Crafty, dishonest arts, oppression, extortion, and above all, fire and sword. They dared to ape the thunder and lightning of heaven, and, assisted by the machina-

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tions of the grand adversary of man, rendered their imitative contrivances for destruction more terrible and deadly than the original. Their imperial robe derived its deep crimson colour from human blood; and the gold and diamonds of their diadems were accumulated treasures wrung from the famished bowels of the poor, born only to toil for others, to be robbed, to be wounded, to be trodden under foot and forgotten in an early grave. How few, in comparison, have reached the age of threescore and ten, and yet, in the midst of youth and health, their days have been full of labour and sorrow. Heaven's vicegerents seldom bestowed a thought upon them, except when it was necessary either to inveigle or to force them to take the sword and march to slaughter. Where God caused the sun to shine gaily, and scattered plenty over the land, his vicegerents diffused famine and solitude. The valley which laughed with corn, they watered with the tear of artificial hunger and distress; the plain that was bright with verdure, and gay with flowrets, they dyed red with gore. They operated on the world as the blast of an east wind, as a pestilence, as a deluge, as a conflagration. Are the horrors inflicted upon the Palatinate forgotten? Have they yet ceased from the earth? Cast your eyes over the plains of Russia, Poland, a great part of Europe, the wilds of Africa, and the gardens of Asia; European despotism has united with oriental, to unparadise the provinces of India.

Thus, if God, in his wisdom, has thought fit to allot us a few evils for the purpose of discipline, the great ones of the world have endeavoured to make the whole of life an evil to the despised and neglected million. The world is now old, and may profit by the lessons of experience. She has decisively declared, that despotism is the grand source of human

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misfortune, the Pandora's box out of which every curse has issued, and scarcely left even hope behind. Despotism, in its extreme, is fatal to human happiness, and, in all its degrees and modifications, injurious. The spirit of it ought therefore to be suppressed on the first and slightest appearance. It should be the endeavour of every good man, *pro virili*, as far as his best abilities will extend, to extirpate all arbitrary government from the globe. It should be swept from the earth, or trampled under foot, from China to Peru. But no power is capable of crushing the Hydra, less than the Herculean arm of a whole people.

I lay it down as an incontrovertible axiom, that all who are born into the world have a right to be as happy in it as the unavoidable evils of nature, and their own disordered passions, will allow. The grand object of all good government, of all government that is not an usurpation, must be to promote this happiness, to assist every individual in its attainment and security. A government chiefly anxious about the emoluments of office, chiefly employed in augmenting its own power and aggrandizing its obsequious instruments, while it neglects the comfort and safety of individuals in middle or low life, is despotic and a nuisance. It is founded on folly as well as wickedness, and, like the freaks of insanity, deals mischief and misery around, without being able to ascertain or limit its extent and duration. If it should not be punished as criminal, let it be coerced as dangerous. Let the strait waistcoat be applied; but let men, judging fellow-men, always spare the axe.

For what rational purpose could we enter into life? To vex, torment, and slay each other with the sword? To be and to make miserable? No,

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by the sweet mercy of Heaven! I firmly believe, that the great King of Kings, intended every son and daughter of Adam to be as happy as the eternal laws of nature, under his controul, permit them to be in this sublunary state. Execrated and exploded be all those politics, with Machiavel, or the Evil Being, their author, which introduce systems of government and manners among the great, inconsistent with the happiness of the majority. Must real tragedies be for ever acting on the stage of human life? Must men go on for ever to be tormentors and executioners of men? Is the world never to profit by the experience of ages? Must not even attempts be made to improve the happiness of life, to improve government, though all arts and sciences are encouraged in their progress to perfection? Must the grand art, the sublimest science, that of meliorating the condition of human nature, be stationary? No; forbid it reason, virtue, benevolence, religion! Let the world be made more and more comfortable to all who are allowed the glorious privilege of seeing the sun and breathing the liberal air. Our forefathers were duped by priests and despots, and, through the timidity of superstition and the blindness of ignorance, submitted to be made artificially miserable. Let us explode that folly which we see; and let every mortal under the cope of heaven enjoy existence, as long as nature will allow the feast to continue, without any restraints on liberty but such as the majority of uncorrupted guests unite in agreeing to be salutary, and therefore conducive to the general festivity. Men are too serious in pursuing toys, money, titles, stars, ribands, triumphs, any thing that gives a momentary distinction, and gratifies an unmanly pride. They have embraced a cloud for a goddess. Let them dispel the mist, raised by false policy and

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cruel despotism. Let them at last distinguish real good, from its delusive appearance. Let them value duly, and pursue diligently, solid comfort, health, cheerfulness, contentment, universal benevolence, and learn to relish the sweets of nature and simplicity. They will then see happiness in something besides the possession of gold; besides those external marks of superiority which raise them to notice, and distinguish them from their equals without a difference. Strife and wars will cease, when men perceive that their highest happiness is most easily attainable in a state of contented tranquillity; their guide, nature, and their guard, innocence.

The principal objects of all rational government, such as is intended to promote human happiness, are two; to preserve peace, and to diffuse plenty. Such government will seldom tax the necessaries of life. It will avoid wars; and, by such humane and wise policy, render taxes on necessaries totally superfluous. Taxes on necessaries are usually caused by war. The poor, however, are not easily excited to insurrection. It is base calumny which accuses them. They are naturally quiescent; inclined to submission by their habits, and willing to reverence all their superiors who behave to them justly and kindly. They deserve to be used well. They deserve confidence. But oppression and persecution may teach them to lift their gigantic arm, and then vain will be resistance. Let not wars then be wantonly undertaken, which, besides their injustice and inhumanity, tend more than any thing else, by increasing taxes, to compel insurrection. The poor man hears great praises bestowed on the government he lives under, and perpetual panegyrics on the constitution. He knows little of general politics. He judges from the effects he feels. He knows that malt, leather, candles,

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soap, salt, and windows, without which he cannot exist in comfort, are so heavily taxed as sometimes to exclude him from obtaining the scanty portion he would require. In return for the defalcations from malt, leather, candles, soap, salt, and windows; he sees pensions, places, rich contractors, disgraceful, ruinous, and bloody wars. Yet he rises up early, and goeth forth to his work and his labour, with cheerfulness. Is he not a worthy, respectable member of society, and deserving of every indulgence? Ought he to be insulted by opprobious appellations, considered as of no political consequence, as possessing no rights, and little removed from the cattle? Suppose millions of such men in a country, ought not their wishes to be consulted, and a regard for their comfort and security to stop the sword, while emerging from its scabbard at the command of a minister?

Great reforms usually come from the people. They are slow to anger, and submit in patience. But grievances may become intolerable; and then their energy displays itself like a torrent, that has long lain still and placid within the dam, which opposed its course to a certain point, but could resist no longer.

When the people appear to be sunk in a political lethargy, let not ministers confide too much in the symptoms. A calm precedes a storm. Long continued abuses, heavy burdens, and severe grievances, without a dream of hope, may awaken the lion. Then, I think, those who have shown an inclination to set up a power unknown to constitutional freedom, and to render government hostile to the people, may justly fear.

And who, it may be asked, are they? I am happy in the opportunity of declaring it my opinion, that the king is not among them. They are men to whom

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neither the king nor the people are dear. They are, in a word, the oligarchy of boroughmongers, whose power is founded on an usurpation; and whose assumed sovereignty is no less inconsistent with the real freedom of a king than of a people. A most respectable society, not long ago, asserted in a petition to the house of commons, and offered to prove it at the bar, that one hundred and fifty-four men nominate and appoint a majority of the house. Has it not been suspected, that one of the principal causes of a war was the preservation of this oligarchy; by turning the attention of the people from a reform of parliament, and endeavouring to give a deadly stab to liberty. If the suspicion be well founded, this very circumstance is the strongest argument for reform which has ever been produced. Oceans of blood, and treasure enough to relieve all the poor in the nation for many years, lavished to establish a despotism, inimical to the king, the people, and to human nature! We have now reached the source of the evil, a source not so concealed as the fountain of the Nile. It is the corruption of boroughs, and the interference of ministers, peers, placemen, pensioners, and expectants, in parliamentary elections, which causes the spirit of despotism to increase; for nature, reason, and self-interest too, if they were not counteracted by corrupt influence, would revolt at it. The egg would be instantly crushed, if it were not constantly guarded and fostered in the warm, well-fortified nest of borough influence, directing all measures and disposing of all patronage.

But they are all honourable men, who are concerned in this influence. Doubtless they are not morally worse or better than others in their situation. Their situation renders them politically iniquitous,



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The world is governed by men, and men by their passions, and their supposed interest. But it is the business of laws to restrain them. The people are bound to watch the conduct of all, whose conduct is influential on their welfare. Unlimited confidence should be given to no man, when the happiness of millions is concerned in the consequences of his actions or counsels.

"The common people," says a sensible author, "generally think that great men have great minds, and scorn base actions; which judgment is so false, that the basest and worst of all actions have been done by great men. They have often disturbed, deceived, and pillaged the world; and he who is capable of the highest mischief is capable of the meanest. He who plunders a country of a million of money would, in suitable circumstances, steal a silver spoon; and a conqueror, who steals and pillages a kingdom, would, in an humbler situation, rifle a portmanteau." I should not, therefore, choose to expose my watch or purse in a crowd, to those men who have plundered Poland, if, instead of possessing a crown of jewels, and the pocket of submissive nations, they had been in the circumstances of a Barrington. Nor, though men should be called honourable, will it be safe to trust our liberties to their honour, without some collateral security; especially when we see them interfering with and controlling elections, contrary to express laws, and contrary not only to the dictates of honour, but of common honesty. They usurp a power for the gratification of pride and avarice, which they cannot hold but to the injury of the lawful and right owners. How differs this, in a moral view, from robbery? It differs, in a political view indeed, inasmuch as it is infinitely more injurious to society.

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The opposers of reform, the invaders of the people's rights, are no less blind and short-sighted than meanly selfish. Let them pour their venom on the people, and dispute popular claims to natural right, as much as they please; the people must at last triumph, and liberty will in time flourish all over Europe. But let them also use a little foresight; consider what revolutions may be, by viewing what have been; and not exasperate mankind too much, lest the irritation and resentment should produce, what God in his mercy, avert, a sanguinary vengeance.

I take my leave on this occasion, recommending, from the bottom of my heart, to men in power, measures of conciliation. Let them come among us with healing in their wings. Let them concede with cheerfulness, whatever cannot be denied without injustice. Let them show themselves real friends to liberty and man. The English nation is remarkable for generosity and good-nature. All their mistakes will be forgiven. There will be no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets. Mercy and truth shall meet together; and righteousness and peace kiss each other. In a word; let parliament be reformed. This measure will remove all grievances, and satisfy all demands. It will at once give permanency to the throne, and happiness to the people. Kings will be republicans, in the true sense of that term; and the spirit of despotism become the spirit of philanthropy.



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# ANTIPOLEMUS;

OR, THE

PLEA OF REASON, RELIGION, AND HUMANITY,

AGAINST WAR.

A FRAGMENT; TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF

ERASMUS.

FIRST PRINTED IN 1795.

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# PREFACE.

## BY THE TRANSLATOR.

Εαν μη ἢ οἱ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΙ βασιλευσωσιν εν ταις πολεσιν, ἢ οι βασιλεις τε νυν λεγομενοι καὶ δυνατται φιλοσοφησωσι γνησιως τε καὶ ἱκανως, καὶ τουτο εις ταυτον ξυμπεση, ΔΥΝΑΜΙΣ ΤΕ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ καὶ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ, ουκ εστι κακων ΠΑΥΛΑ ταις πολεσιν' δοκω δε ΤΩ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΩ ΓΕΝΕΙ. PLATO *de Rep.* lib. v.

Unless either Philosophers bear rule in states, or those who are now called Kings and Potentates, learn to philosophise justly and properly, and thus both civil power and philosophy are united in the same person, it appears to me that there can be no cessation of calamity either to states or to the whole human race.

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IT pleases Almighty God to raise up, from time to time, men of extraordinary abilities, combined with virtues no less extraordinary; who, in the dark night of ignorance and prejudice, shine, like the nocturnal lamp of Heaven, with solitary but serene lustre; obscured indeed at first by the gathering clouds of envy, unseen awhile through the voluntary blindness of self-interest; almost extinguished by civil and ecclesiastical bigotry; but at length, bursting through every obstacle, and reflecting a steady light on those labyrinths of error which lead to misery. Such was ERASMUS; a name, at the mention of which, all that is great and good, and learned and free, feels a sentiment of cordial respect, and rises to pay a voluntary obeisance.

God had given him an intellect in a state of vigour rarely indulged to the sons of men. Trained in the

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school of adversity, he sought and found in it the sweet solace of learning and virtue. He there cultivated his native talents by early and constant exercise; and thus accumulated, by indefatigable industry, a store of knowledge; which, by means of an eloquence scarcely exceeded in the golden ages, he lavishly disseminated over the world, at that time barren, dark, and dreary, to enlighten and to fertilize it.

God had given him not only a preeminent intellect, but a gift still more estimable, a good and feeling heart, a love of truth, a warm philanthropy, which prompted him to exert his fine abilities, totally regardless of mean honours, or sordid profits, in diffusing most important information, in an age when human misery was greatly augmented by gross ignorance, and when man, free-born but degraded man, was bound down in darkness, with double shackles, in the chains of a twofold despotism, usurping an absolute dominion, both in church and in state, over the body and the soul.

These two gifts combined formed an Erasmus; a man justly deemed and called the Phœnix of his age. He it was who led the way both to the revival of learning and the restoration of religion. Taste and polite letters are no less indebted to him than rational theology. Liberty acknowledges him as one of her noblest assertors. Had he not appeared and fought on the side of humanity, with the spear of truth and the lash of ridicule, Europe, instead of enjoying or contending for freedom at this hour, might perhaps have been still sunk in the dead repose of servitude, or galled with the iron hand of civil tyrants; allied, for mutual aid, in a villanous confederacy, with the despotism of ecclesiastics. Force and fraud, availing themselves of the

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superstitious fears of ignorance, had united against the people, conspired against the majority of men, and dealt their curses through the land without mercy or controul. Then rose Erasmus, not indeed furnished with the arms of the warrior, but richly adorned with the arts of peace. By the force of superior genius and virtue, he shook the Pontiff's chair under him, and caused the thrones of the despots to tremble. They shrunk, like the ugly birds of the evening, from the light; they wished to hide themselves in the smoke that they had raised around them; but the rays of his genius penetrated the artificial mist and exposed them to the derision of the deluded and oppressed multitude. The fortress of the tyrant and the mask of the hypocrite were both laid open on the combined attack of argument and ridicule.

It was impossible but that the penetrating mind of Erasmus should see the grave follies, and mark the sanctified villanies of his time. He saw them, and laughed them to scorn. He took the side of human nature; serving every body, and obliging nobody. He sought no reward, but the approbation of his God and his conscience; and left the little great ones to contend among themselves, unenvied and unrivalled by him, for coronets, mitres, croziers, and cardinals' hats, while he, undignified, untitled, unknown by any addition to the name of Erasmus, studied, and successfully promoted, the improvement and happiness of human nature; the great society of all human beings united under one king, their common Creator and Preserver.

As he marked and reprobated the folly and misery of superstition, so he saw and no less clearly demonstrated the absurdity, the wretchedness, and the wickedness of War. His heart felt for the misery

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of man, exposed by the perverseness of his rulers, in addition to the natural and moral evil he is doomed to suffer, to all the calamities of war. He found in his intellectual storehouse, arms sufficient to encounter this giant fiend in his castle. On the rock of Religion he planted the artillery of solid arguments. There they still stand; and when the impediments of prejudice, pride, malice, and ambition shall be removed, which now retard their operation, they will beat down the ill-founded citadel, but tressed as it is by all the arts and arms of human power, endeavouring to build a fancied fabric of selfish or private felicity on the wreck and ruins of human nature.

Erasmus demands attention. His learning, his abilities will reward attention. His disinterestedness secures, from all disinterested men, a most respectful attention. Poor in the world, but rich in genius; obscure at his birth, and unpreferred at his death, but illustrious by his virtues, he became the self-appointed champion of man, a volunteer in the service of miserable mortals, an unbought advocate in the cause of those who could only repay him with their love and their prayers; the poor outcast, the abject slave of superstition or tyranny, and all the nameless, numberless sons of want and woe, born only to suffer and to die.

This great man has actually succeeded in exploding ecclesiastical tyranny: for we are greatly indebted to him for the reformation. We feel at this hour, and acknowledge with alacrity, the benefit of his theological labours in removing one cruel prejudice. It is true he has not yet succeeded in abolishing war. Success was more difficult, where arguments only were to be opposed to men of violence, armed with muskets, bayonets, and trains of artillery. The

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very din of arms stifles the still small voice of reason. But the friends of man will not yet despair, Erasmus their guide; God and nature urging their exertions, and a bleeding world imploring their merciful interference. Theirs is a real crusade: the olive, the dove, and the cross, their standards; the arts of persuasion, their arms; mercy to man, their watchword; the conquest of pride, prejudice, and passion, their victory; peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, their trophies and reward.

With such enemies as pride, prejudice, and passion, the conflict must be long and obstinate. The beneficent efforts of Erasmus were violently opposed while he lived, and his name aspersed with the blackest calumny. Where indeed is the great benefactor to society at large, the friend of man, not of a faction, who has not been opposed, who has not been calumniated by those who are selfishly interested in the misery of others, and personally benefitted by the continuation of abuse? By what description of men was Erasmus opposed? By sordid worldlings, wearing the cloak of religion, to hide the ugliness of their avarice and ambition; by opulent dunces, whose stupidity was exceeded by nothing but their malice, selfishly wallowing in luxury, and forgetful that any existed but themselves, with rights to God's best gifts, life, comfort, peace, and liberty; by wretches sunk in the dull indolence of unwieldy pomp, who claimed a prescriptive right to respect; and considered all the active part of mankind as mere vassals, and all that dared to suggest improvement, either civil or ecclesiastical, as dangerous and seditious innovators; by priests, who thought, and indeed justly thought, that, in proportion as the light of knowledge was diffused, their craft was in danger. By these, and such as these, Erasmus was opposed

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in his endeavours to revive learning, and to reform religion. But, great by nature, a lord by God's creation, a pontiff by the election of his own superior genius, virtue, learning, and piety, he rose above all his opposers. They feared and honoured, while they hated and calumniated him. Popes, emperors, and kings courted his favour; and through dread of his heaven-bestowed power, paid him a sincerer and more reverential homage than they ever extorted from their myrmidons. Though he was stigmatized as an innovator, menaced, slandered, harassed by literary controversy, they felt the weight of his superiority, bowed to him from their thrones, and would gladly have domesticated him in their palaces; but he spurned their offers, and preferred, to the most splendid servitude, that liberty which he loved, and whose charms he had displayed to nations pining in darkness and in dungeons. Such, to the honour of truth and goodness, of genius and learning, such was the natural dominion of real and indisputable abilities, preserved in a state of independence by a virtue equally real, and a spirit truly noble. Every one has probably heard, that it has been said by *Bruyere*, and repeated by all true friends to personal merit, that "he who cannot be an Erasmus, "must content himself with being a bishop." One may go farther and say, that he who cannot be an Erasmus, must condescend to a second rank, and be satisfied with becoming a pope, or an emperor. The dominion of genius and virtue like his was indeed of divine right. It was the gift of God for the good of man.

I have thus submitted my ideas, and the ideas of his own age, and of all the protestant literati, concerning the author of this *Fragment on War*, which I now place before the English reader. In the course

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of my reading I found it accidentally; and, struck with its excellence, translated it freely; modernising it, and using, where perspicuity seemed to require, the allowed liberty of occasional paraphrase. I have not indeed scrupled to make those slight alterations or additions which seemed necessary, to give the author's ideas more completely to the English reader, and to render the meaning fully intelligible, without a marginal commentary. It will occur to every one, that the purposes of philanthropy rather than of philology, the happiness of human nature rather than the amusements of verbal criticism, were intended by the author, as well as the translator, in this Dissertation.

There will never be wanting pamphleteers and journalists to defend war, in countries where prime ministers possess unlimited patronage in the church, in the law, in the army, in the navy, in all public offices, and where they can bestow honours, as well as emoluments, on the obsequious instruments of their own ambition. It seems now to be the general wish of indolent luxury in high life, to throw itself on the public for maintenance; but the strongest bridge may break when overladen. Truth will then prevail; and venality and corruption, exceeding all bounds, be driven into everlasting exile.

It gives me pleasure to discover, that my own favourable opinion of this philanthropic piece is confirmed by so great a critic as Bayle; whose words are these, in a note on the life of Erasmus:

"Jamais homme n'a été plus éloigné que lui de l'humeur impétueuse de certains théologiens, qui se plairent à corner la guerre. Pour lui, il aimoit la paix et il en connoissoit l'importance.

"Une des plus belles dissertations, que l'on puisse lire est celle d'Erasme sur le proverbe, *Dulce bellum*

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*inexpertis.* Il y fait voir qu'il avoit profondement médité les plus importans principes de la raison et de l'évangile, et les causes les plus ordinaires des guerres. Il fait voir que la méchanceté de quelques particuliers, et la sottise* des peuples, produirent presque toutes les guerres; et qu'une chose, dont les causes sont si blamables, est presque toujours suivie d'une très pernicieux effet. Il prétend que ceux que leur profession devroit le plus engager à déconseiller les guerres, en sont les instigateurs.*****

"Les loix, poursuit-il, les statuts, les priviléges, tout cela demeure sursis, pendant le fracas des armes. Les Princes trouvent alors cent moiens de parvenir à la puissance arbitraire; et de là vient, que quelques-uns ne sauroient suffrir la paix."

Near three hundred years have elapsed since the composition of this Treatise. In so long a period, the most enlightened which the history of the world can display, it might be supposed that the diffusion, of Christianity, and the improvements in arts, sciences, and civilisation, would either have abolished war, or have softened its rigour. It is however a melancholy truth, that war still rages in the world, polished as it is, and refined by the beautiful arts, by the *belles lettres,* and by a most liberal philosophy. Within a few years the warriors of a mighty and a Christian kingdom, were instructed to hire the savages of America to fight against a sister nation, or rather its own child; a nation speaking the same language with its parent, worshipping the same God, and hoping to become a joint heir of immortality. The savages were furnished with hatchets, to cut and hack the flesh and bones of their fellow Chris-

* War is a game, which, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at.——— COWPER.

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tians; of those who may be deemed in a political sense, their brothers, sisters, and children. The savages cruel enough by nature, finding their cruelty encouraged by Christians, used the hatchet, the tomahawk, and the scalping knife, with redoubled alacrity. The poor Indians were called, by those who justified the employment of them, the means which God and nature put into their hands; and the engaging of them on their side was thought a master-stroke of political wisdom. They were rewarded with money, and numbered among good and faithful allies.* After efforts so execrable, the very party

* A secretary of state, in a letter to General Carleton, dated Whitehall, March 26, 1777, says: "As this plan cannot be advantageously executed without the assistance of Canadians and Indians, his Majesty strongly recommends it to your care to furnish both expeditions with good and sufficient bodies of those men. And I am happy in knowing that your influence among them is so great, that there can be no room to apprehend you will find it difficult to fulfil his Majesty's intention."

In the "*Thoughts for conducting the War from the Side of Canada,*" by General Burgoyne, that general desires a thousand or more savages. This man appears to have been clever, and could write comedies and act tragedies, *utrinquè paratus.*

Colonel Butler was desired to distribute the king's bounty-money among such of the savages as would join the army; and, after the delivery of the presents, he asks for 4011*l.* York currency, before he left Niagara. He adds, in a letter that was laid on the table in the House of Commons, "I flatter myself that you will not think the expense, however high, to be useless, or given with too lavish a hand. I waited seven days to deliver them the presents, and GIVE THEM THE HATCHET, which they accepted, and promised to make use of it." This letter is dated Ontario, July 28, 1777.

In another letter, Colonel Butler says, "The Indians threw in a heavy fire on the rebels, and made a shocking slaughter with their spears and hatchets. The success of this day will plainly show the utility of your excellency's constant support of my unwearied endeavours to conciliate to his majesty so serviceable a body of allies." This letter is from Colonel Butler to Sir Guy Carleton,

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which put the hatchet into the hands of the savages, for the purpose of hewing their brothers in pieces, was vanquished, and piled their arms with ignominy, in sight of an insulted foe; leaving posterity to contemplate the scene with the indignation ever due to savage barbarity, and at the same time, with the contempt which naturally falls on malice of intention, cruelly displayed without power of execution.

Have the great and polished nations of Europe profited by this detestable example, and avoided every approach to barbarity? What must we think of the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto? What must be said of engaging Algerine pirates, against inoffensive merchantmen pursuing their business in the great waters; what of instigating the Indians of America once more, against a friendly nation in a state of perfect peace? Rumours of such enormous cruelty and injustice, in very recent times, have been diffused by men in high rank, and of most indisputable authority. If they are founded, never let it be said that the arguments against war, which Erasmus and other philanthropists have used, are needless, in the present times of boasted lenity and refinement. Have the French, or the Germans, or the Russians conducted themselves with such exemplary humanity, as to prove to the world that exhortations to it are no longer necessary? Tens of thousands of those who could answer this question most accurately, are now sleeping in the grave; *where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.*

dated Camp before Fort Stanwix, Aug. 15, 1777.—See also Burgoyne's proclamation.

In another letter to Sir Guy Carleton, of July 28, Colonel Butler very coolly says, "Many of the prisoners were, conformably to the Indian custom, afterwards killed." See more on this subject, in page 228 of a volume intituled "The Speeches of Mr. Wilkes," printed in the year 1786.

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The ferocity of native barbarians admits of some excuse, from their state of ignorance unenlightened, and of passion unsoftened, by culture. They profess not a religion which teaches to forgive. But a similar ferocity, coolly, deliberately approved, recommended, and enforced by the highest authority, in a state justly pretending to all the polish of cultivated manners, and professing the purest Christianity, is mischievous, flagitious, and detestable, without one alleviating circumstance. The blackness of the deed is not diluted with one drop of a lighter colour to soften the shade. Let the curtain fall upon the picture. Let no historian record such conduct in the annals of his country, lest it be deemed by posterity a libel on human nature.

To eradicate from the bosom of man principles which argue not only obduracy, but malignity, is certainly the main scope of the Christian religion; and the clergy are never better employed in their grand work, the melioration of human nature, the improvement of general happiness, than when they are reprobating all propensities whatever, which tend, in any degree, to produce, to continue, or to aggravate the calamities of war; those calamities which, as his majesty graciously expressed it, in one of his speeches from the throne,* are inseparable from a state of war.

The most ardent zeal, the most pertinacious obstinacy is displayed in preserving the minutest article of what is called orthodox opinion. But, alas! what, in a world of woe like this, what signifies our boasted orthodoxy in matters of mere speculation, in matters totally irrelevant to human happiness or misery? What signifies a jealous vigilance over thirty-nine articles, if we neglect one article, the law

* In the year 1777.



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of charity and love; if we overlook the *weightier matters*, which CHRIST himself enacted, as articles of his religion, indispensably to be subscribed by all who hope for salvation in him; I mean forgiveness of injuries, mercy, philanthropy, humility? There is nothing so heterodox, I speak under the correction of the reverend prelacy, as war, and the passions that lead to it, such as pride, avarice, and ambition. The greatest heresy I know, is to shed the blood of an innocent man, to rob by authority of a Christian government, to lay waste by law, to destroy by privilege, that which constitutes the health, the wealth, the comfort, the happiness, the sustenance of a fellow-creature, and a fellow Christian. This is heresy and schism with a vengeance! against which we ought most devoutly to pray, in a daily litany, or a new form of prayer. Where, after all the heart-burnings and blood-shedding occasioned by religious wars; where is the true church of Christ, but in the hearts of good men; the hearts of merciful believers, who from principle, in obedience to and for the love of Christ, as well as from sympathy, labour for peace, go about doing good, consulting, without local prejudice, the happiness of all men, and instead of confining their good offices to a small part, endeavour to pour oil into the wounds of suffering human nature? In the hearts of such men, united in love to God and his creatures, is the church of Christ. Stone walls and steeples are not necessary to the true church; and mitres and croziers are little better than helmets and swords, when the wearers of them countenance by their counsels, or even connive at by their silence, the unchristian passions and inhuman practices inseparable from a state of war. The poor soldier in the field is but an instrument in the hands of others. The counsellors of war;—they are the warriors. The

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ministers of state;—they are the disturbers of peace; and surely it is lawful to censure them, for their heads are unanointed.

The passions which lead to war are diseases. Is there no medicine for them? There is a medicine and an antidote. There is a catholicon provided by the great Physician; and it is the pious office of the clergy to administer it, *ægris mortalibus*, to poor mortals lying sick in the great hospital of the world. "Take physic, Pomp," they may say to all princes who delight in war;—imbibe the balsamic doctrines of the gospel. Pride, avarice, and ambition, are indeed difficult to cure; but it must be remembered that the medicine is powerful; and the good physician, instead of despairing, redoubles his efforts, when the disease is inveterate.

I hope the world has profited too much by experience, to encourage any offensive war, under the name and pretext of a holy war. Whether religion has been lately made use of to justify war, let others judge. We read in a recent form, an ardent prayer for protection against "those who, in the very centre of Christendom, threaten destruction to Christianity, and desolation to every country where they can erect their bloody standard!" It is meet, right, and our bounden duty to pray for protection against such men; but it would be alarming to those who remember the dreadful havoc of religious wars in former ages, if at this period, religion were publicly and solemnly assigned as a reason for continuing war. I think the apostolical method of converting the "declared enemies to Christian kings, and impious blasphemers of God's holy name," must be more desirable to bishops and archbishops than the arm of flesh, the sword of the destroyer. The prayer ends with these words: "We are devoutly sensible, that all our



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efforts will be ineffectual, unless thou, O God, from whom cometh our help, and from whom alone it can come, goest forth with our fleets and armies. Our counsels, our hands, and our hearts, are under thy Almighty direction. Direct them, (the hands, &c.) O Lord, to such exertions as may manifest us to be under thy guidance. Convince our adversaries that thine arm (assisted by our hands) stretched out, can defeat the most daring designs against our peace; and that those who lift up their banners against thee, (that is, against us), shall be humbled under thy Almighty hand." If this is not to represent a war as a holy war, what constitutes a holy war? As the prayer comes from great authority, it is to be received with deference; but it may be lawful to suggest, that it would have been very consistent with Christianity to have prayed in general terms, for peace without blood; to have prayed for our "adversaries" that they might be "convinced" of their fatal errors, not by our hands, but by persuasion, and by the grace of God. There follows indeed another very ardent prayer for our enemies; than which nothing can be more proper. It is only to be lamented, that Christianity should be represented in the former prayer, by those who are supposed best to understand it, as in any respect countenancing the propagation of the faith, or the conversion of unbelievers, by the sword, by fleets and armies, by exertions of the hand in the field of battle. Let Mahomet mark the progress of the faith by blood. Such modes of erecting the Cross are an abomination to Jesus Christ. Is it, after all, certain, that the slaughter of the unbelievers will convert the survivors to the religion of the slaughterers? Is the burning of a town, the sinking of a ship, the wounding and killing hundreds of thousands in the field, a proof of the lovely

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and beneficent spirit of that Christianity to which the enemy is to be converted, by the philanthropic warriors? Have not Jews, Turks, and infidels of all descriptions, triumphed in the everlasting wars of those who profess to be the disciples of the peaceful Jesus, the teachers and preachers of the gospel of peace?

The composers of these prayers are probably pious and good men; but, in treading in the footsteps of less enlightened predecessors, are they not, without intending it, rendering religion subservient to a secular ambition? They sometimes censure politics as the subject of sermons; but are politics more allowable in prayers than in sermons? and is it right in twelve million of men to pray, by order of the shepherds of their souls, for vengeance from their common Father on thirty million? To pray for mercy on them all; to pray that wars may cease over the whole world; to pray that those who have erred and are deceived may be persuaded to think and to do what is right;—This is indeed princely, episcopal, Christian, and humane.

The Christian religion is either true or untrue. If true, as the church teaches, as I firmly believe, and as the law requires us all to believe; then it must be of the highest importance to men individually, and therefore in the aggregate. It is the first concern of the whole human race. National policy shrinks to nothing, in comparison with the happiness of the universal family of all mankind. If the Christian religion be true, it must supersede all the measures of worldly wisdom, which obstruct its views or interfere with its doctrines; therefore it must supersede war: if false, then why a national establishment of it, in the very country which pronounces it false? why an order of clergy publicly maintained to sup-

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port it? why do we see churches every where rising around us? why this hypocrisy? why is it not abolished, as an obstacle to military operations, and to other transactions of state necessity? The language of deeds is more credible than the language of words; and the language of deeds asserts that the Christian religion is untrue. They who defend war, must defend the dispositions which lead to war; and these dispositions are absolutely forbidden by the gospel. The very reverse of them is inculcated in almost every page. Those dispositions being extinguished, war must cease; as the rivulet ceases to flow when the fountain is destitute of water; or as the tree no longer buds and blossoms, when the fibres, which extract the moisture from the earth, are rescinded or withered. It is not necessary that there should be in the gospel an absolute prohibition of war in so many express words; it is enough that malice and revenge are prohibited. The cause ceasing, the effect can be no more. Therefore I cannot think it consistent with the duty of a bishop, or any other clergyman, either to preach or pray in such a manner as to countenance, directly or indirectly, any war, but a war literally, truly, and not jesuitically, a defensive war *pro aris et focis;* and even then, it would be more characteristic of Christian divines to pray for universal peace, for a peaceable conversion of the hearts of our enemies, rather than for bloody victory.

Wars of ambition, for the extension of empire or for the gratification of pride, envy, and malice, can never be justified; and therefore it is, that all belligerent powers agree to call their several wars defensive in the first instance, and then, just and necessary. This is a tacit, but a very striking acknowledgment, on all sides, that offensive war is

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unjustifiable. But the misfortune is, that power is never without the aid of ingenious sophistry to give the name of right to wrong; and, with the eloquence which Milton attributes to the devil, to make the worse appear the better cause.

But as war is confessedly PUBLICA MUNDI CALAMITAS, the common misfortune of all the world, it is time that good sense should interpose, even if religion were silent, to controul the mad impetuosity of its cause, ambition. Ambition is a passion in itself illimitable. Macedonia's madman was bounded in his ravages by the ocean. The demigod, Hercules, was stopt in his progress by the pillars, called after his name, at Gades; but to ambition, connected as it usually is, in modern times, with avarice, there is no ocean, no Gades, no limit, but the grave. Had Alexander, Cæsar, Charles the Twelfth, or Louis the Fourteenth, been immortal in existence on earth, as they are in the posthumous life of fame, they must have shared the world among them in time, and reigned in it alone, or peopled with their own progeny. The middle ranks, among whom chiefly resides learning, virtue, principle, truth, every thing estimable in society, would have been extinct. Despots would have let none live but slaves; and those only, that they might administer to their idleness, their luxury, their vice. But though Alexander and Cæsar, and Charles and Louis, are dead, yet ambition is still alive, and nothing but the progress of knowledge in the middle ranks, and the prevalence of Christianity in the lowest, have prevented other Alexanders, other Cæsars, other Charleses, and other Louises, from arising, and, like the vermin of an east wind, blasting the fairest blossoms of human felicity. Many Christian Rulers might with great propriety employ, like the Heathen, a remembrancer,

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to sound for ever in their ears, Forget not that thou art a man; to tell them, that the poorest soldier under their absolute command was born, like them, of woman, and that they like him shall die. The clergy, in Christian countries, possess this office of remembrancers to the great as well as to the little. To execute it they probably go to courts. They do well: let them not fear to execute it with fidelity. The kingdom of Christ should be maintained by them, so long as it is tenable, by argument and the mild arts of evangelical persuasion, though all other kingdoms fall. The Christian religion being confessedly true, there is a kingdom of Christ; and the laws of that kingdom must be of the first obligation. No sophistry can elude the necessary conclusion, "FIAT VOLUNTAS DEI; ADVENIAT REGNUM EJUS;" such is our daily prayer, and such should be our daily endeavour.

If it be true, that infidelity is increasing, if a great nation be indeed throwing aside Christianity, instead of the superstition that has disgraced it; it is time that those who believe in Christianity, and are convinced that it is beneficial to the world, show mankind its most alluring graces, its merciful, benignant effects, its utter abhorrence of war, its favourable influence on the arts of peace, and on all that contributes to the solid comfort of human life. But it is possible that, as it is usual to bend a crooked stick in the contrary direction in order to make it straight, so this great nation, in exploding the follies and misery of superstition, may be using a latitude and licentiousness of expression concerning the Christian religion, which it does not itself sincerely approve, merely to abolish the ancient bigotry. The measure is, I think, wrong, because it is of dangerous example; but whoever thinks so, ought to endeavour to rectify

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the error by persuasion, rather than to extirpate the men, by fire and sword, who have unhappily fallen into it. Their mistakes call upon their fellow-men for charity, but not for vengeance. *Vengeance is mine, I will repay,* saith the Lord. Our own mild and Christian behaviour towards those who are in error, is the most likely means of bringing them into the pale of Christianity, by the allurement of an example so irresistibly amiable. If the sheep have gone astray, the good shepherd uses gentle means to bring them into the fold. He does not allow the watchful dog to tear their fleeces; he does not send the wolf to devour them; neither does he hire the butcher to shed their blood, in revenge for their deviation. But who are we? Not shepherds, but a part of the flock. The spiritual state of thirty million of men is not to be regulated, any more than their worldly state, by twelve million. Are the twelve million all Christians, all qualified by their superior holiness to be either guardian or avenging angels? It is indeed most devoutly to be wished, that religion in the present times may not be used, as it has often been in former days, to sharpen the sword of war, and to deluge the world with gore. Let these matters remain to be adjusted, not by bullets and bayonets, but between every man's own conscience and God Almighty.

It is obvious to observe, that great revolutions are taking place, I mean not political revolutions; but revolutions in the mind of man, revolutions of far more consequence to human nature, than revolutions in empire. Man is awaking from the slumber of childish superstition, and the dreams of prejudice. Man is becoming more reasonable; assuming with more confidence his natural character, approaching more nearly his original excellence as a rational

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being, and as he came from his Creator. Man has been metamorphosed from the noble animal God made him, to a slavish creature little removed from a brute, by base policy and tyranny. He is now emerging from his degenerate state. He is learning to estimate things as they are clearly seen, in their own shape, size, and hue; not as they are enlarged, distorted, discoloured by the mists of prejudice, by the fears of superstition, and by the deceitful mediums which politicians and pontiffs invented, that they might enjoy the world in state without molestation.

War has certainly been used by the great of all ages and countries except our own, as a means of supporting an exclusive claim to the privileges of enormous opulence, stately grandeur, and arbitrary power. It employs the mind of the multitude, it kindles their passions against foreign, distant, and unknown persons, and thus prevents them from adverting to their own oppressed condition, and to domestic abuses. There is something fascinating in its glory, in its ornaments, in its music, in its very noise and tumult, in its surprising events, and in victory. It assumes a splendour, like the harlot, the more brilliant, gaudy, and affected, in proportion as it is conscious to itself of internal deformity. Paint and perfume are used by the wretched prostitute in profusion, to conceal the foul ulcerous sores, the rottenness and putrescence of disease. The vulgar and the thoughtless, of which there are many in the highest ranks, as well as in the lowest, are dazzled by outward glitter. But improvement of mind is become almost universal, since the invention of printing; and reason, strengthened by reading, begins to discover, at first sight and with accuracy, the difference between paste and diamonds, tinsel and bullion. It begins to see that there can be no glory in mutual

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destruction; that real glory can be derived only from beneficial exertions, from contributions to the conveniencies and accommodations of life; from arts, sciences, commerce, and agriculture; to all which war is the bane. It begins to perceive clearly the truth of the poor Heathen's observation, Ου το μεγα εν· αλλα το εν μεγα· The *great* is not therefore *good;* but the *good* is therefore *great.*

It is indeed difficult to prevent the mind of the many from admiring the splendidly destructive, and to teach it duly to appreciate the useful and beneficial, unattended with ostentation. There are various prejudices easily accounted for, which from early infancy familiarize the ideas of war and slaughter, which would otherwise shock us. The books read at school were mostly written before the Christian era. They celebrate warriors with an eloquence of diction, and a spirit of animation, which cannot fail to captivate a youthful reader. The more generous his disposition, the quicker his sensibility, the livelier his genius, the warmer his imagination, the more likely is he, in that age of inexperience, to catch the flame of military ardour. The very ideas of bloody conquerors are instilled into his heart, and grow with his growth. He struts about his school, himself a hero in miniature, a little Achilles panting for glorious slaughter. And even the vulgar, those who are not instructed in classical learning by a Homer or a Cæsar, have their Seven Champions of Christendom, learn to delight in scenes of carnage, and think their country superior to all others, not for her commerce, not for her liberty, not for her civilisation, but for her bloody wars. Happily for human nature, great writers have lately taken pains to remove those prejudices of the school and nursery, which tend to increase the natural misery of man; and consequently

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war, and all its apparatus begin to be considered among those childish things, which are to be put away in the age of maturity. It will indeed require time to emancipate the stupid and unfeeling slaves of custom, fashion, and self-interest, from their more than Egyptian bondage.

Erasmus stands at the head of those writers who have attempted the emancipation. With as much wit and comprehension of mind as Voltaire and Rousseau; he has the advantage of them in two points, in sound learning, and in religion. His learning was extensive and profound, and there is every reason to believe that he was a sincere Christian. His works breathe a spirit of piety to God, equalled only by his benevolence to man. The narrow-minded politicians, who look no farther than to present expedients, and cannot open their hearts wide enough to unite in their minds the general good of human nature, with the particular good of their own country, will be ready to explode his observations on the malignity of war. But till they have proved to the suffering world, that their heads and hearts are superior to Erasmus, they will not diminish his authority by invective or derision. Let ministers of state, who, by the way, are always cried up as paragons of ability, wonders of the world, for the time being; let under-secretaries, commissioners, commissaries, contractors, clerks, and borough-jobbers, the warm patrons of all wars; let these men prove themselves superior in intellect, learning, piety, and humanity, to Erasmus, and I give up the cause. Let war fill their coffers, and cover them all over with ribands, stars, and garters; let them praise and glorify each other; let them rejoice and revel in the song and the dance; and let the stricken deer go weep, the middle ranks and the poor, who certainly constitute

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the majority of the human race, and who have in all ages fallen unpitied victims to war. MULTIS UTILE BELLUM, or the emoluments of war, sufficiently account for the opposition which some men make to peace and to peace-makers.

But the cause is ultimately safe in the hands of Erasmus; for he has established it on the rock Truth. It stands on the same base with the Christian religion. Reason, humanity, and sound policy, are among the columns that firmly support it; and to use the strong language of Scripture, the gates of hell shall not finally prevail against it. Let it be remembered that the reformation of religion was more unlikely in the twelfth century, than the total abolition of war in the eighteenth.

I hope and believe, I am serving my fellow-creatures in all climes, and of all ranks, in bringing forward this Fragment; in reprobating war, and in promoting the love of peace. That my efforts may be offensive to particular persons who are the slaves of prejudice, pride, and interest, is but too probable. I sincerely lament it. But whatever inconvenience I may suffer from their temporary displeasure, I cannot relinquish the cause. The total abolition of war, and the establishment of perpetual and universal peace, appear to me to be of more consequence than any thing ever achieved, or even attempted, by mere mortal man, since the creation. The goodness of the cause is certain, though its success, for a time, doubtful. Yet will I not fear. I have chosen ground, solid as the everlasting hills, and firm as the very firmament of heaven. I have planted an acorn; the timber and the shade are reserved for posterity.

It requires no apology to have placed before freemen, in their vernacular language, the sentiments of a truly good and wise man on a subject of the most

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momentous consequence. They accord with my own; and I have been actuated, in bringing them forward, by no other motive than the genuine impulse of humanity. I have no purposes of faction to serve. I am a lover of internal order as well as of public peace. I am duly attached to every branch of the constitution; though certainly not blind to some deviations from primitive and theoretical excellence, which time will ever cause in the best inventions of men. I detest and abhor atheism and anarchy as warmly and truly as the most sanguine abettors of war can do; but I am one who thinks, in the sincerity of his soul, that reasonable creatures ought always to be coerced, when they err, by the force of reason, the motives of religion, the operation of law; and not by engines of destruction. In a word, I utterly disapprove all war, but that which is strictly defensive. If I am in error, pardon me, my fellow-creatures; I trust I shall obtain the pardon of my God.

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# ANTIPOLEMUS;

OR, THE

## PLEA OF REASON, RELIGION, AND HUMANITY,

## AGAINST WAR.

If there is in the affairs of mortal men any one thing which it is proper uniformly to explode; which it is incumbent on every man, by every lawful means, to avoid, to deprecate, to oppose, that one thing is doubtless war. There is nothing more unnaturally wicked, more productive of misery, more extensively destructive, more obstinate in mischief, more unworthy of man as formed by nature, much more of man professing Christianity.

Yet, wonderful to relate! in these times, war is every where rashly, and on the slightest pretext, undertaken; cruelly and savagely conducted, not only by unbelievers, but by Christians; not only by laymen, but by priests and bishops; not only by the young and inexperienced, but even by men far advanced in life, who must have seen and felt its dreadful consequences; not only by the lower order, the rude rabble, fickle in their nature, but, above all, by princes, whose duty it is to compose the rash passions of the unthinking multitude by superior wisdom and the force of reason. Nor are there ever wanting men learned in the law, and even divines, who are

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ready to furnish firebrands for the nefarious work, and to fan the latent sparks into a flame.

Whence it happens, that war is now considered so much a thing of course, that the wonder is, how any man can disapprove of it; so much sanctioned by authority and custom, that it is deemed impious, I had almost said heretical, to have borne testimony against a practice in its principle most profligate, and in its effects pregnant with every kind of calamity.

How much more justly might it be matter of wonder, what evil genius, what accursed fiend, what hell-born fury first suggested to the mind of man, a propensity so brutal, such as instigates a gentle animal, formed by nature for peace and good-will, formed to promote the welfare of all around him, to rush with mad ferocity on the destruction of himself and his fellow-creatures!

Still more wonderful will this appear, if, laying aside all vulgar prejudices, and accurately examining the real nature of things, we contemplate with the eyes of philosophy, the portrait of man on one side, and on the other the picture of war!

In the first place then, if any one considers a moment the organization and external figure of the body, will he not instantly perceive, that nature, or rather the God of nature, created the human animal not for war, but for love and friendship; not for mutual destruction, but for mutual service and safety; not to commit injuries, but for acts of reciprocal beneficence.

To all other animals, nature, or the God of nature, has given appropriate weapons of offence. The inborn violence of the bull is seconded by weapons of pointed horn; the rage of the lion with claws. On the wild boar are fixed terrible tusks. The elephant,

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in addition to the toughness of his hide and his enormous size, is defended with a proboscis. The crocodile is covered with scales as with a coat of mail. Fins serve the dolphin for arms; quills the porcupine; prickles the thornback; and the gallant chanticleer, in the farm-yard, crows defiance, conscious of his spur. Some are furnished with shells, some with hides, and others with external teguments, resembling, in strength and thickness, the rind of a tree. Nature has consulted the safety of some of her creatures, as of the dove, by velocity of motion. To others she has given venom as a substitute for a weapon; and added a hideous shape, eyes that beam terror, and a hissing noise. She has also given them antipathies and discordant dispositions corresponding with this exterior, that they might wage an offensive or defensive war with animals of a different species.

But man she brought into the world naked from his mother's womb, weak, tender, unarmed; his flesh of the softest texture, his skin smooth and delicate, and susceptible of the slightest injury. There is nothing observable in his limbs adapted to fighting, or to violence; not to mention that other animals are no sooner brought forth, than they are sufficient of themselves to support the life they have received; but man alone, for a long period, totally depends on extraneous assistance. Unable either to speak, or walk, or help himself to food, he can only implore relief by tears and wailing; so that from this circumstance alone might be collected, that man is an animal born for that love and friendship which is formed and cemented by the mutual interchange of benevolent offices. Moreover, nature evidently intended that man should consider himself indebted for the boon of life, not so much to herself as to the



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kindness of his fellow man; that he might perceive himself designed for social affections, and the attachments of friendship and love. Then she gave him a countenance, not frightful and forbidding, but mild and placid, intimating by external signs the benignity of his disposition. She gave him eyes full of affectionate expression, the indexes of a mind delighting in social sympathy. She gave him arms to embrace his fellow-creatures. She gave him lips to express an union of heart and soul. She gave him alone the power of laughing; a mark of the joy of which he is susceptible. She gave him alone tears, the symbol of clemency and compassion. She gave him also a voice; not a menacing and frightful yell, but bland, soothing, and friendly. Not satisfied with these marks of her peculiar favour, she bestowed on him alone the use of speech and reason; a gift which tends more than any other to conciliate and cherish benevolence, and a desire of rendering mutual services; so that nothing among human creatures might be done by violence. She implanted in man a hatred of solitude, and a love of company. She sowed in his heart the seeds of every benevolent affection; and thus rendered what is most salutary, at the same time most agreeable. For what is more agreeable than a friend? what so necessary? Indeed if it were possible to conduct life conveniently without mutual intercourse, yet nothing could be pleasant without a companion, unless man should have divested himself of humanity, and degenerated to the rank of a wild beast. Nature has also added a love of learning, an ardent desire of knowledge; a circumstance which at once contributes in the highest degree to distinguish man from the ferocity of inferior animals, and to endear him cordially to his fellow-creature: for neither the relationship of af-

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finity nor of consanguinity binds congenial spirits with closer or firmer bands, than an union in one common pursuit of liberal knowledge and intellectual improvement. Add to all this, that she has distributed to every mortal endowments, both of mind and body, with such admirable variety, that every man finds in every other man, something to love and to admire for its beauty and excellence, or something to seek after and embrace for its use and necessity. Lastly, kind nature has given to man a spark of the divine mind, which stimulates him, without any hope of reward, and of his own free will, to do good to all: for of God, this is the most natural and appropriate attribute, to consult the good of all by disinterested beneficence. If it were not so, how happens it that we feel an exquisite delight, when we find that any man has been preserved from danger, injury, or destruction, by our offices or intervention? How happens it that we love a man the better, because we have done him a service?

It seems as if God has placed man in this world, a representative of himself, a kind of terrestrial deity, to make provision for the general welfare. Of this the very brutes seem sensible, since we see not only tame animals, but leopards and lions, and, if there be any more fierce than they, flying for refuge, in extreme danger, to man. This is the last asylum, the most inviolable sanctuary, the anchor of hope in distress to every inferior creature.

Such is the true portrait of man, however faintly and imperfectly delineated. It remains that I compare it, as I proposed, with the picture of war; and see how the two tablets accord, when hung up together and contrasted.

Now then view, with the eyes of your imagination, savage troops of men, horrible in their very visages



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and voices; men, clad in steel, drawn up on every side in battle array, armed with weapons, frightful in their crash and their very glitter; mark the horrid murmur of the confused multitude, their threatening eye-balls, the harsh jarring din of drums and clarions, the terrific sound of the trumpet, the thunder of the cannon, a noise not less formidable than the real thunder of heaven, and more hurtful; a mad shout like that of the shrieks of bedlamites, a furious onset, a cruel butchering of each other!—See the slaughtered and the slaughtering!—heaps of dead bodies, fields flowing with blood, rivers reddened with human gore!—It sometimes happens that a brother falls by the hand of a brother, a kinsman upon his nearest kindred, a friend upon his friend, who, while both are actuated by this fit of insanity, plunges the sword into the heart of one by whom he was never offended, not even by a word of his mouth!—So deep is the tragedy, that the bosom shudders even at the feeble description of it, and the hand of humanity drops the pencil while it paints the scene.

In the mean time I pass over, as comparatively trifling, the corn-fields trodden down, peaceful cottages and rural mansions burnt to the ground, villages and towns reduced to ashes, the cattle driven from their pasture, innocent women violated, old men dragged into captivity, churches defaced and demolished, every thing laid waste, a prey to robbery, plunder, and violence!

Not to mention the consequences which ensue to the people after a war, even the most fortunate in its event, and the justest in its principle: the poor, the unoffending common people, robbed of their little hard-earned property: the great, laden with taxes: old people bereaved of their children; more cruelly killed by the murder of their offspring than

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by the sword; happier if the enemy had deprived them of the sense of their misfortune, and life itself, at the same moment: women far advanced in age, left destitute, and more cruelly put to death, than if they had died at once by the point of the bayonet; widowed mothers, orphan children, houses of mourning; and families, that once knew better days, reduced to extreme penury.

Why need I dwell on the evils which morals sustain by war, when every one knows, that from war proceeds at once every kind of evil which disturbs and destroys the happiness of human life?

Hence is derived a contempt of piety, a neglect of law, a general corruption of principle, which hesitates at no villany. From this source rushes on society a torrent of thieves, robbers, sacrilegists, murderers; and, what is the greatest misfortune of all, this destructive pestilence confines not itself within its own boundaries; but, originating in one corner of the world, spreads its contagious virulence, not only over the neighbouring states, but draws the most remote regions, either by subsidies, by marriages among princes, or by political alliances, into the common tumult, the general whirlpool of mischief and confusion. One war sows the seeds of another. From a pretended war, arises a real one; from an inconsiderable skirmish, hostilities of most important consequence; nor is it uncommon, in the case of war, to find the old fable of the Lernæan lake, or the Hydra, realized. For this reason, I suppose, the ancient poets (who penetrated into the nature of things with wonderful sagacity, and shadowed them out with the aptest fictions) handed down by tradition, that war originated from hell, that it was brought thence by the assistance of furies, and that only the most furious of the furies, Alecto,

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was fit for the infernal office. The most pestilent of them all was selected for it,

> ————Cui nomina mille,
> Mille nocendi Artes. VIRG.

As the poets describe her, she is armed with snakes without number, and blows her blast in the trumpet of hell. Pan fills all the space around her with mad uproar. Bellona, in frantic mood, shakes her scourge. And the unnatural, impious fury, breaking every bond asunder, flies abroad all horrible to behold, with a visage besmeared with gore!

Even the grammarians, with all their trifling ingenuity, observing the deformity of war, say, that BELLUM, the Latin word for war, which signifies also the beautiful, or comely, was so called by the rhetorical figure Contradiction, (κατ' αντιφρασιν,) because it has nothing in it either good or beautiful; and that bellum is called bellum, by the same figure as the furies are called Eumenides. Other etymologists, with more judgment, derive bellum from bellua, a beast, because it ought to be more characteristic of beasts than of men, to meet for no other purpose than mutual destruction.

But to me it appears to deserve a worse epithet than brutal; it is more than brutal, when men engage in the conflict of arms; ministers of death to men! Most of the brutes live in concord with their own kind, move together in flocks, and defend each other by mutual assistance. Indeed all kinds of brutes are not inclined to fight even their enemies. There are harmless ones like the hare. It is only the fiercest, such as lions, wolves, and tigers, that fight at all. A dog will not devour his own species; lions, with all their fierceness, are quiet among themselves; dragons are said to live in peace with dra-

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gons; and even venomous creatures live with one another in perfect harmony.—But to man, no wild beast is more destructive than his fellow man.

Again; when the brutes fight, they fight with the weapons which nature gave them; we arm ourselves for mutual slaughter, with weapons which nature never thought of, but which were invented by the contrivance of some accursed fiend, the enemy of human nature, that man might become the destroyer of man. Neither do the beasts break out in hostile rage for trifling causes; but either when hunger drives them to madness, or when they find themselves attacked, or when they are alarmed for the safety of their young. We, good Heaven! on frivolous pretences, what tragedies do we act on the theatre of war! Under colour of some obsolete and disputable claim to territory; in a childish passion for a mistress; for causes even more ridiculous than these, we kindle the flames of war. Among the beasts, the combat is for the most part only one against one, and for a very short space. And though the contest should be bloody, yet when one of them has received a wound, it is all over. Whoever heard (what is common among men in one campaign) that a hundred thousand beasts had met in battle for mutual butchery? Besides, as beasts have a natural hatred to some of a different kind, so are they united to others of a different kind, in a sincere and inviolable alliance. But man with man, and any man with any man, can find an everlasting cause for contest, and become, what they call, natural enemies; nor is any agreement or truce found sufficiently obligatory to bind man from attempting, on the appearance of the slightest pretexts, to commence hostilities after the most solemn convention. So true it is, that whatever has deviated from its

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own nature into evil, is apt to degenerate to a more depraved state, than if its nature had been originally formed with inbred malignity.

Do you wish to form a lively idea, however imperfect, of the ugliness and the brutality of war, (for we are speaking of its brutality,) and how unworthy it is of a rational creature? Have you ever seen a battle between a lion and a bear? What distortion, what roaring, what howling, what fierceness, what bloodshed! The spectator of a fray, in which mere brutes like these are fighting, though he stands in a place of safety, cannot help shuddering at a sight so bloody. But how much more shocking a spectacle to see man conflicting with man, armed from head to foot with a variety of artificial weapons! Who could believe that creatures so engaged were men, if the frequency of the sight had not blunted its effect on our feelings, and prevented surprise? Their eyes flashing, their cheeks pale, their very gait and mien expressive of fury; gnashing their teeth, shouting like madmen, the whole man transformed to steel; their arms clanging horribly, while the cannon's mouth thunders and lightens around them. It would really be less savage, if man destroyed and devoured man for the sake of necessary food, or drank blood through lack of beverage. Some, indeed, (men in form) have come to such a pitch as to do this from rancour and wanton cruelty, for which expediency or even necessity could furnish only a poor excuse. More cruel still, they fight on some occasions with weapons dipt in poison, and engines invented in Tartarus, for wholesale havoc at a single stroke.

You now see not a single trace of man, that social creature, whose portrait we lately delineated. Do you think nature would recognise the work of her

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own hand—the image of God? And if any one were to assure her that it was so, would she not break out into execrations at the flagitious actions of her favourite creature? Would she not say, when she saw man thus armed against man, "What new sight do I behold? Hell itself must have produced this portentous spectacle. There are, who call me a step-mother, because in the multiplicity of my works I have produced some that are venomous, (though even they are convertible to the use of man,) and because I created some, among the variety of animals, wild and fierce; though there is not one so wild and so fierce, but he may be tamed by good management and good usage. Lions have grown gentle, serpents have grown innoxious under the care of man. Who is this then, worse than a step-mother, who has brought forth a non-descript brute, the plague of the whole creation? I, indeed, made one animal, like this, in external appearance; but with kind propensities, all placid, friendly, beneficent. How comes it to pass, that he has degenerated to a beast, such as I now behold, still in the same human shape? I recognise no vestige of man, as I created him. What demon has marred the work of my hands? What Sorceress, by her enchantments, has discharged from the human figure, the human mind, and supplied its place by the heart of a brute? What Circe has transformed the man that I made into a beast? I would bid this wretched creature behold himself in a mirror, if his eyes were capable of seeing himself when his mind is no more. Nevertheless, thou depraved animal, look at thyself, if thou canst; reflect on thyself, thou frantic warrior, if by any means thou mayst recover thy lost reason, and be restored to thy pristine nature. Take the looking-glass, and inspect it. How came that threatening crest of plumes upon thy head?

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Did I give thee feathers? Whence that shining helmet? Whence those sharp points, which appear like horns of steel? Whence are thy hands and arms furnished with sharp prickles? Whence those scales, like the scales of fish, upon thy body? Whence those brazen teeth? Whence those plates of brass all over thee? Whence those deadly weapons of offence? Whence that voice, uttering sounds of rage more horrible than the inarticulate noise of the wild beasts? Whence the whole form of thy countenance and person distorted by furious passions, more than brutal? Whence that thunder and lightning which I perceive around thee, at once more frightful than the thunder of heaven, and more destructive to man? I formed thee an animal a little lower than the angels, a partaker of divinity; how camest thou to think of transforming thyself into a beast so savage, that no beast hereafter can be deemed a beast, if it be compared with man, originally the image of God, the lord of the creation?"

Such, and much more, would, I think, be the outcry of indignant Nature, the architect of all things, viewing man transformed to a warrior.

Now, since man was so made by nature, as I have above shown him to have been, and since war is that which we too often feel it to be, it seems matter of infinite atonishment, what demon of mischief, what distemperature, or what fortuitous circumstances, could put it into the heart of man to plunge the deadly steel into the bosom of his fellow-creature. He must have arrived at a degree of madness so singular by insensible gradations, since

Nemo repentè fuit turpissimus. Juv.

It has ever been found that the greatest evils have insinuated themselves among men under the shadow

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and the specious appearance of some good. Let us then endeavour to trace the gradual and deceitful progress of that depravity which produced war.

It happened then, in primeval ages, when men, uncivilized and simple, went naked, and dwelt in the woods, without walls to defend, and without houses to shelter them, that they were sometimes attacked by the beasts of the forest. Against these, man first waged war; and he was esteemed a valiant hero and an honourable chief who repelled the attack of the beasts from the sons of men. Just and right it was to slaughter them who would otherwise have slaughtered us, especially when they aggressed with spontaneous malice, unprovoked by all previous injury. A victory over the beasts was a high honour, and Hercules was deified for it. The rising generation glowed with a desire to emulate Hercules; to signalize themselves by the slaughter of the noxious animals; and they displayed the skins which they brought from the forest, as trophies of their victory. Not satisfied with having laid their enemies at their feet, they took their skins as spoils, and clad themselves in the warm fur, to defend themselves from the rigour of the seasons. Such was the blood first shed by the hand of man, such was the occasion, and such the spoils.

After this first step, man advanced still farther, and ventured to do that which Pythagoras condemned as wicked and unnatural, and which would appear very wonderful to us, if the practice were not familiarized by custom; which has such universal sway, that in some nations it has been deemed a virtuous act to knock a parent on the head, and to deprive him of life, from whom we received the precious gift; in others it has been held a duty of religion to eat the flesh even of near and dear departed friends who had

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been connected by affinity; it has been thought a laudable act to prostitute virgins to the people in the temple of Venus; and custom has familiarized some other practices still more absurd, at the very mention of which, every is one ready to pronounce them abominable. From these instances, it appears that there is nothing so wicked, nothing so atrocious, but it may be approved, if it has received the sanction of custom, the authority of fashion. From the slaughter of wild beasts, men proceeded to eat them, to tear the flesh with their teeth, to drink their blood; and, as Ovid expresses it, to entomb dead animals in their own bowels. Custom and convenience soon reconciled the practice (animal slaughter and animal food) to the mildest dispositions. The choicest dainties were made of animal food by the ingenuity of the culinary art; and men, tempted by their palate, advanced a step farther: from noxious animals which alone they had at first slaughtered for food, they proceeded to the tame, the harmless, and the useful. The poor sheep fell a victim to this ferocious appetite.

ANIMAL SINE FRAUDE DOLOQUE.

The hare was doomed also to die, because his flesh was a dainty viand: nor did they spare the gentle ox, who had long sustained the ungrateful family by his labours at the plough. No bird of the air, or fish of the waters, was suffered to escape; and the tyranny of the palate went such lengths, that no living creature on the face of the globe was safe from the cruelty of man. Custom so far prevailed, that no slaughter was thought cruel, while it was confined to any kind of animals, and so long as it abstained from shedding the blood of man.

But though we may prevent the admission of vices,

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as we may prevent the entrance of the sea; yet when once either of them is admitted, it is not in every one's power to say, "thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." When once they are fairly entered, they are no longer under our command, but rush on uncontrolled in the wild career of their own impetuosity.

Thus, after the human mind had been once initiated in shedding blood, anger soon suggested, that one man might attack another with the fist, a club, a stone, and destroy the life of an enemy as easily as of a wild beast. To such obvious arms of offence, they had hitherto confined themselves: but they had learned from the habit of depriving cattle of life, that the life of man could be also taken away by the same means without difficulty. The cruel experiment was long restricted to single combat: one fell, and the battle was at an end: sometimes it happened that both fell: both, perhaps, proving themselves by this act unworthy of life. It now seemed to have an appearance even of justice, to have taken off an enemy; and it soon was considered as an honour, if any one had put an end to a violent or mischievous wretch, such as a Cacus or Busiris, and delivered the world from such monsters in human shape. Exploits of this kind we see also among the praises of Hercules.

But when single combatants met, their partisans, and all those, whom kindred, neighbourhood, or friendship, had connected with either of them, assembled to second their favourite. What would now be called a fray or riot, was then a battle or a warlike action. Still, however, the affair was conducted with stones, or with sharp-pointed poles. A rivulet crossing the ground, or a rock opposing their progress, put an end to hostilies, and peace ensued.

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In process of time, the rancour of disagreeing parties increased, their resentments grew warmer, ambition began to catch fire, and they contrived to give executive vigour to their furious passions, by the inventions of their ingenuity. Armour was therefore contrived, such as it was, to defend their persons; and weapons fabricated, to annoy and destroy the enemy.

Now at last they began to attack each other in various quarters with greater numbers, and with artificial instruments of offence. Though this was evidently madness, yet false policy contrived that honour should be paid to it. They called it war; and voted it valour and virtue, if any one, at the hazard of his own life, should repel those whom they had now made and considered as an enemy, from their children, their wives, their cattle, and their domestic retreat. And thus the art of war keeping pace with the progress of civilisation, they began to declare war in form, state with state, province with province, kingdom with kingdom.

In this stage of the progress they had indeed advanced to great degrees of cruelty, yet there still remained vestiges of native humanity. Previously to drawing the sword, satisfaction was demanded by a herald; Heaven was called to witness the justice of the cause; and even then, before the battle began, pacification was sought by the prelude of a parley. When at last the conflict commenced, they fought with the usual weapons, mutually allowed, and contended by dint of personal valour, scorning the subterfuges of stratagem and the artifices of treachery. It was criminal to aim a stroke at the enemy before the signal was given, or to continue the fight one moment after the commander had sounded a retreat.

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In a word, it was rather a contest of valour than a desire of carnage: nor yet was the sword drawn but against the inhabitants of a foreign country.

Hence arose despotic government, of which there was none in any country that was not procured by the copious effusion of human blood. Then followed continual successions of wars, while one tyrant drove another from his throne, and claimed it for himself by right of conquest. Afterwards, when empire devolved to the most profligate of the human race, war was wantonly waged against any people, in any cause, to gratify the basest of passions; nor were those who deserved ill of the lordly despot chiefly exposed to the danger of his invasions, but those who were rich or prosperous, and capable of affording ample plunder. The object of a battle was no longer empty glory, but sordid lucre, or something still more execrably flagitious. And I have no doubt but that the sagacious mind of Pythagoras foresaw all these evils, when, by his philosophical fiction of transmigration, he endeavoured to deter the rude multitude from shedding the blood of animals: he saw it likely to happen, that a creature who, when provoked by no injury, should accustom himself to spill the blood of a harmless sheep, would not hesitate, when inflamed by anger, and stimulated by real injury, to kill a man.

Indeed, what is war but murder and theft, committed by great numbers on great numbers? the greatness of numbers not only not extenuating its malignity, but rendering it the more wicked, in proportion as it is thus more extended, in its effects and its influence.

But all this is laughed at as the dream of men unacquainted with the world, by the stupid, ignorant, unfeeling grandees of our time, who, though they

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possess nothing of man but the form, yet seem to themselves little less than earthly divinities.

From such beginnings, however, as I have here described, it is certain, man has arrived at such a degree of insanity, that war seems to be the chief business of human life. We are always at war, either in preparation, or in action. Nation rises against nation; and, what the heathens would have reprobated as unnatural, relatives against their nearest kindred, brother against brother, son against father!—more atrocious still!—a Christian against a man! and worst of all, a Christian against a Christian! And such is the blindness of human nature, that nobody feels astonishment at all this, nobody expresses detestation. There are thousands and tens of thousands ready to applaud it all, to extol it to the skies, to call transactions truly hellish, a holy war. There are many, who spirit up princes to war, mad enough as they usually are of themselves; yet are there many who are always adding fuel to their fire. One man mounts the pulpit, and promises remission of sins to all who will fight under the banners of his prince. Another exclaims, "O invincible prince! only keep your mind favourable to the cause of religion, and God will fight (his own creatures) for you." A third promises certain victory, perverting the words of the prophetical Psalmist to the wicked and unnatural purposes of war. "*Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.*" Psalm xci. 5.

The whole of this mystical psalm is wrested to signify something in favour of the most profane of all profane things, and to second the interested

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views of this or that earthly potentate. Both parties find such passages in the Prophets or the Psalmist on their own side; and such interpreters of the Prophets fail not to find their admirers, their applauders, and their followers.

Such warlike sermons have we heard from the mouths of grave divines, and even of bishops. These men are, in fact, warriors; they help on the cause. Decrepit as they are in person, they fight from the pulpit the battles of the prince, who, perhaps, raised them to their eminence. Priests fight, in fact, when they set others on to fight; even Monks fight, and, in a business truly diabolical, dare to use the name and authority of Jesus Christ.

Thus two armies shall meet in the field, both bearing before them the standard of the cross, which alone might suggest to their minds, how the followers of Christ are to carry on their warfare, and to gain their victory.

From the holy sacrament itself, in which the perfect and unspeakable union of all Christians is represented, these very Christians shall march with eager haste to mutual slaughter, and make Christ himself both the spectator and instigator to a wickedness, no less against nature, than against the spirit of Christianity. For where, indeed, is the kingdom of the devil, if not in a state of war? Why do we drag Christ thither, who might, much more consistently with his doctrine, be present in a brothel, than in the field of battle?

St. Paul expresses his indignation, that there should be even a hostile controversy or dispute among Christians; he rather disapproves even litigation before a judge and jury. What would he have said, if he had seen us waging war all over the world; waging war, on the most trifling causes,



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with more ferocity than any of the heathens, with more cruelty than any savages; led on, exhorted, assisted by those who represent a pontiff professing to be pacific, and to cement all Christendom under his influence; and who salute the people committed to their charge with the phrase, "PEACE BE UNTO YOU!"

I am well aware what a clamour those persons will raise against me who reap a harvest from public calamity. "We engage in war," they always say, "with reluctance, provoked by the aggression and the injuries of the enemy. We are only prosecuting our own rights. Whatever evil attends war, let those be responsible for it who furnished the occasion of this war, a war to us just and necessary."

But if they would hold their vociferous tongues a little while, I would show, in a proper place, the futility of their pretences, and take off the varnish with which they endeavour to disguise their mischievous iniquity.

As I just now drew the portrait of man and the picture of war, and compared one with the other, that is, compared an animal the mildest in his nature, with an institution of the most barbarous kind; and as I did this, that war might appear, on the contrast, in its own black colours; so now it is my intention to compare war with peace, to compare a state most pregnant with misery, and most wicked in its origin, with a state profuse of blessings, and contributing, in the highest degree, to the happiness of human nature; it will then appear to be downright insanity to go in search of war with so much disturbance, so much labour, so great profusion of blood and treasure, and at such a hazard after all, when with little labour, less expense, no bloodshed, and no risk, peace might be preserved inviolate.

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Now amidst all the good this world affords, what is more delightful to the heart of man, what more beneficial to society, than love and amity? Nothing, surely. Yet what is peace, but love and amity subsisting between great numbers? And, on the other hand, what is war, but hatred and enmity subsisting between great numbers? But it is the nature of all good, that the more it is extended, the greater the good becomes, the more benign its influence; therefore, if the amicable union of individuals is so sweet and so salutary, how much will the sum total of happiness be augmented, if kingdom with kingdom, and nation with nation, coalesce in this amicable union? On the other hand, it is the nature of all evil, that its malignity increases, the more it is extended; and therefore, if it is wretched, if it is wicked for one man to meet another with a sword pointed at his vitals, how much more wretched and more wicked, that thousands and tens of thousands should meet in the same manner? By union little things are augmented to a respectable magnitude; by disunion, the greatest fall to insignificance and dissolution. Peace is, indeed, at once the mother and the nurse of all that is good for man: War, on a sudden, and at one stroke, overwhelms, extinguishes, abolishes, whatever is cheerful, whatever is happy and beautiful, and pours a foul torrent of disasters on the life of mortals. Peace shines upon human affairs like the vernal sun. The fields are cultivated, the gardens bloom, the cattle are fed upon a thousand hills, new buildings arise, ancient edifices are repaired, riches flow, pleasures smile, laws retain their vigour, the discipline of the police prevails, religion glows with ardour, justice bears sway, humanity and charity increase, arts and manufactures feel the genial warmth of encouragement,



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the gains of the poor are more plentiful, the opulence of the rich displays itself with additional splendour, liberal studies flourish, the young are well educated, the old enjoy their ease, marriages are happy, good men thrive, and the bad are kept under controul. But no sooner does the storm of war begin to lower, than what a deluge of miseries and misfortunes seizes, inundates, and overwhelms all things within the sphere of its action! The flocks are scattered, the harvest trampled, the husbandman butchered, villas and villages burnt, cities and states, that have been ages rising to their flourishing state, subverted by the fury of one tempest, the storm of war. So much easier is the task of doing harm than of doing good; of destroying than of building up! The earnings of honest industry, the wealth of quiet citizens, are transferred to the pockets of execrable robbers and murderers. Private houses exhibit the dismal effects of fear, sorrow, and complaint; and all places resound with the voice of lamentation. The loom stands still; the trowel, the axe, and the hammer are silent; and the poor manufacturers must either starve, or have recourse to wicked practices for daily bread. The rich either deplore the diminution and loss of their property, or lie under terrible apprehension for what remains; in both circumstances rendered by war incapable of enjoying the common comforts of life. Marriages are few, or attended with distressful and fatal consequences. Matrons, deserted by their husbands, now forced to the wars, pine at home in childless solitude. The laws are compelled to silence, charity is laughed at, justice has no dwelling-place, and religion becomes an object of scorn, till no distinction is left between the sacred and the profane. Youth is corrupted by every species of vice; old men lament their longevity:

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and their grey hairs descend with sorrow to the grave. No honour is paid to learning, sciences, arts; the elegant pursuits of liberal and honourable minds. In a word, more misery is felt from war than the eloquence of any man, much more than mine, is able to describe: yet it might be borne patiently, if war made us miserable only, and did not corrupt our morals, and involve us in guilt; if peace made us only happier, and not better: but the man who engages in war by choice, when he could have avoided it; that man, whoever he is, is a wicked man: he sins against nature, against God, against man, and is guilty of the most aggravated and complicated impiety.

Too many, alas! are the evils by which miserable mortality is of necessity tormented, worn out, and at last overwhelmed. Two thousand years ago, no fewer than three hundred names of dangerous diseases, besides their various species and degrees, were discovered by the physicians: and every day, even now, new diseases arise. Old age itself is a disease, an incurable disease. We read of whole cities buried in ruins by earthquakes, or burnt to ashes by lightning, whole countries swallowed up in chasms occasioned by subterranean convulsions; not to mention how many men are lost by casualties, which, by the frequency of their occurrence, cease to surprise; how many are drowned in seas and rivers; how many destroyed by poison, by falling, by other accidents; how many by intemperance in food, in drink, in sleep. The most trifling thing can deprive man of life. A grape-stone in the throat, a hair, a bone of a fish, has brought many to an untimely grave. Sudden joy has been fatal: no wonder that grief has been so. Add to all this the plague, and pestilent, contagious fevers of various kinds, which

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frequently commit their ravages, without mercy or distinction, throughout a whole city or province. There is no quarter from which danger does not hang, as it were, by a hair over the life of man. Life itself, even if no accident shorten it, flies away with the swiftest velocity. Such and so great are the miseries of human life, that Homer did not hesitate to pronounce man, of all creatures, to whom the breath of life has been given, the most miserable. But these evils, as they cannot easily be shunned, and fall on our heads without any fault of our own, make us indeed wretched, but do not render us guilty.

Nevertheless, why should those who are obnoxious to so many calamities go voluntarily in quest of an adscititious evil, as if the measure of misery required to be full to the very brim, and to run over; in quest of an evil, not a common evil, but an evil, of all human evils, the worst and the foulest; so destructive an evil, that alone it exceeds them all in mischief; so abundant in misery, that it comprehends every kind of wretchedness within itself; so pestilential in its nature, that it loads men with guilt in proportion as it galls them with woe; rendering them at the same time objects of the greatest pity, yet unworthy of being pitied at all; unless, indeed, it be those who, while they feel the misery with the greatest acuteness of suffering, have the least concern in causing it, and would have prevented it, if they had possessed power corresponding with their innocent inclination?

To these considerations add, that the advantages derived from peace diffuse themselves far and wide, and reach great numbers; while in war, if any thing turns out happily, (though, O my God, what can ever deserve the appellation of happy in war!) the advantage redounds only to a few, and those unworthy of reap-

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ing it. One man's safety is owing to the destruction of another; one man's prize derived from the plunder of another. The cause of rejoicings made by one side is to the other a cause of mourning. Whatever is unfortunate in war, is severely so indeed; and whatever, on the contrary, is called good fortune, is a savage and a cruel good fortune, an ungenerous happiness deriving its existence from another's woe. Indeed, at the conclusion, it commonly happens, that both sides, the victorious and the vanquished, have cause to deplore. I know not whether any war ever succeeded so fortunately in all its events, but that the conqueror, if he had a heart to feel, or an understanding to judge, as he ought to do, repented that he ever engaged in it at all.

Therefore, since peace is confessedly of all things the best and the happiest; and war, on the contrary, appears to be attended with the greatest possible distress of every kind, and the blackest villany of which human nature is capable, can we think those men of sound mind or honest hearts, who, when they might enjoy the blessings of peace with little trouble, merely by negociation, go out of their way, rush headlong into every difficulty and danger, to involve a whole people in the horrors of war?

How unpleasant, in the first place, to the unoffending people, is the first rumour of war? and in the next, how unpopular does it render the prince, when he is compelled to rob his own subjects by taxes upon taxes, and tribute upon tribute! How much trouble and anxiety in forming and preserving alliances! How much in engaging foreign troops, who are let out by their owners to fight for hire! How much expense, and at the same time solicitude, in fitting out fleets, in building or repairing forts, in manufacturing all kinds of camp equipage, in fabri-

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cating and transporting machines, armour, weapons, baggage, carriages, provisions! What infinite fatigue in fortifying towns, digging trenches, excavating mines, in keeping watch and ward, in exercising, reviewing, manœuvring, marching and countermarching! I say nothing of the constant state of fear and alarm in which the people live: I say nothing of the real danger to which they are perpetually exposed. Such is the uncertainty of war, that what is there not to be feared in it? Who can enumerate the inconveniencies and hardships which they who foolishly go to war, (*Stultissimi milites*, says Erasmus,) endure in a camp! deserving greater, because they voluntarily undergo all that they suffer! Food such as a hog would loathe; beds which even a bug would disdain; little sleep, and that little at the will of another; a tent exposed to every bitter blast that blows, and often not even a tent to shelter their cold limbs from the wind and the weather! They must continue all night, as well as day, in the open air; they must lie on the ground; they must stand in their arms; they must bear hunger, cold, heat, dust, rain; they must be in a state of abject slavery to their leaders; even beaten with canes! There is, indeed, no kind of slavery on earth more unworthy man than the slavery of these poor wretches in unnecessary wars! After all these hardships, comes the dreadful signal for engagement! To death they must go! They must either slay without mercy, or fall without pity!

Such and so great are the evils which are submitted to, in order to accomplish an end, itself a greater evil than all that have preceded in preparation for it. We thus afflict ourselves for the noble end of enabling ourselves to afflict others. If we were to calculate the matter fairly, and form a just

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computation of the cost attending war, and that of procuring peace, we should find that peace might be purchased at a tenth part of the cares, labours, troubles, dangers, expenses, and blood, which it costs to carry on a war. You lead a vast multitude of men into danger of losing their lives, in order to demolish some great city; while the same labour and fatigue of these very men would build, without any danger, a more magnificent city than the city doomed to demolition. But the object is to do all possible injury to an enemy. A most inhuman object, let me tell you! And consider, whether you can hurt him essentially, without hurting, at the same time, and by the same means, your own people. It surely is to act like a madman to take to yourself so large a portion of certain evil, when it must ever be uncertain how the die of war may fall in the ultimate issue.

But grant that the heathens might be hurried into all this madness and folly by anger, by ambition, by avarice, by cruelty, or, which I am rather inclined to believe, by the furies sent from Hell for that very purpose; yet how could it ever enter into our hearts, that a Christian should imbrue his hands in the blood of a Christian! If a brother murder his brother, the crime is called fratricide: but a Christian is more closely allied to a Christian as such, then a brother by the ties of consanguinity; unless the bonds of nature are stronger than the bonds of Christ, which Christians, consistently with their faith, cannot allow. How absurd then is it, that they should be constantly at war with each other; who form but one family, the church of Christ; who are members of the same body; who boast of the same head, even Jesus Christ; who have one Father in Heaven, common to them all; who grow in grace by the same spirit; who

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are initiated in the same mysteries, redeemed by the same blood, regenerated at the same font, nourished by the same holy sacrament, militate under the same great Captain of Salvation, eat of the same bread, partake of the same cup, have one common enemy, the devil, and are all called to the same eternal inheritance?

Where are there so many and so sacred obligations to perfect concord as in the Christian religion? Where so numerous exhortations to peace? One law Jesus Christ claimed as his own peculiar law, and it was the law of love or charity. What practice among mankind violates this law so grossly as war? Christ salutes his votaries with the happy omen of peace. To his disciples he gives nothing but peace; he leaves them no other legacy but peace. In his holy prayers, the subject of his devout entreaty was principally, that, as he was one with the Father, so his disciples, that is to say, all Christians, might be one with him. This union is something more than peace, more than friendship, more than concord, it is an intimate communion with the Divine Nature.

Solomon was a type of Christ. But the word Solomon in Hebrew signifies the Pacific. Solomon, on this account, because he was pacific, was chosen to build the temple. David, though endeared by some virtues, was rejected as a builder of the temple, because he had stained his hands in blood, because he was a sanguinary prince, because, in a word, he was a warrior. He was rejected for this, though the wars he carried on were against the wicked, and at the command of God; and though he, who afterwards abrogated, in great measure, the laws of Moses, had not yet taught mankind that they ought to love their enemies.

At the nativity of Jesus Christ, the angels sung

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not the glories of war, nor a song of triumph, but a hymn of peace. "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST; ON EARTH PEACE; GOOD-WILL TOWARDS MEN." The mystic poet and prophet foretold before his birth,

"FACTUS EST IN PACE LOCUS EJUS." *Psalm* lxxvi. 2.

"IN THE CITY OF PEACE (SALEM) HE MADE HIS DWELLING-PLACE; THERE BRAKE HE THE ARROWS OF THE BOW, THE SHIELD, THE SWORD, AND THE BATTLE-AXE.

"HE SHALL REFRAIN THE SPIRIT OF PRINCES; HE IS TERRIBLE TO THE KINGS OF THE EARTH."

Examine every part of his doctrine, you will find nothing that does not breathe peace, speak the language of love, and savour of charity: and as he knew that peace could not be preserved, unless those objects for which the world contends with the sword's point, were considered as vile and contemptible, he ordered us to learn of him to be meek and lowly. He pronounced those happy who held riches, and the daughters of riches, pomp and pride, in no esteem; for these he calls the poor in spirit, and these he has blessed. He pronounced those happy, who despised the pleasures of the world; for he says, blessed are the mourners; even they who patiently suffered themselves to be extruded from their possessions, knowing that our place of residence on earth is a place of exile, and that our true country and our best riches are in heaven. He pronounced those happy who, while deserving well of all, should be evil-spoken of, and persecuted with ill-usage. He prohibited resistance to evil. In short, as the whole of his doctrine recommended forbearance and love, so his life taught nothing but mildness, gentleness, and kind affection. Such was his reign; thus did he wage war, thus he conquered, and thus he triumphed.

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Nor do the Apostles inculcate any other doctrine; they who had imbibed the purest spirit of Christ, and were filled with sacred draughts from the fountain head before it was polluted. What do all the epistles of St. Paul resound with, but peace, but long-suffering, but charity? What does St. John speak of and repeat continually, but Christian love? What else St. Peter? What else all writers in the world who are truly Christian?

Whence then the tumults of war among the children of peace? Is it a mere fable, when Christ calls himself the vine, and his disciples the branches? Who can conceive a branch divided against a branch of the same tree? Or is it an unmeaning assertion, which St. Paul has repeatedly made, that the Church is one body, united in its many members, and adhering to one head, Jesus Christ? Who ever beheld the eye contending with the hand, or the belly fighting against the foot?

In the whole universe, consisting of parts so discordant, there still continues a general harmony. In the animal body there is peace among all the members; and with whatever excellence one member is endowed, it confines not the benefit to itself, but communicates it to all. If any evil happen to one member, the whole body affords it assistance. Can then the mere animal connection of nature in a material body, formed soon to perish, effect more in preserving harmony, than the union of the spirit in a mystical and immortal body? Is it without meaning that we pray, according to the command of Christ, *thy will be done in earth as it in heaven?* In the kingdom of heaven there is perfect concord. But Christ intended that his church should be nothing less than a celestial community, a heaven upon earth; men who belong to it living, as much,

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as possible, according to the model of the heavenly kingdom, hastening thither, and feeling and acknowledging their whole dependance upon it for present and future felicity.

Come then, and let us picture in imagination some stranger, either from those nations in the moon which Empedocles inhabits, or those worlds which Democritus fabricated; let us suppose him just arrived at this world of ours, and desirous of knowing what is going on here: and when he has been informed of the various living creatures upon its surface, let him be told that there is one animal, wonderfully composed of two distinct parts; of a body which he possesses in common with the brutes; of a mind which bears a semblance of the Divine mind, and is the image of the Creator; that he is so noble in his nature, that though here in a state of exile, yet has he dominion over all other animals; that feeling his celestial origin, he is always aspiring at heaven and immortality; that he is so dear to the eternal Deity, that, since he was unable, either by the powers of nature, or the deductions of philosophy, to reach the excellence at which he aspired, the eternal Deity delegated his own Son to bring to him from heaven a new doctrine. Then, after the stranger should have heard the whole life of Christ, and become perfectly acquainted with his laws and precepts, let us suppose him to ascend some lofty pinnacle, whence he might see with his own eyes the things which he had heard by report, concerning this noble animal, rational, Christian, immortal man.

When he should have seen all other animals living at peace with their own kind, guided by the laws of nature, and desiring nothing but what nature taught them to desire: but at the same time observed, that there was one animal, and one alone, traf-

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ficking dishonestly, intriguing treacherously, quarrelling and waging war with its own kind; would he not be apt to suspect any of the other animals to be man, of whom he had heard so much, rather than that two-legged creature which is really man, thus perverted, as he would appear, from the state in which God made, and to which Christ came to restore him? But suppose the stranger informed by some guide, that this animal is really man, he would next look about to find in what place these christian animals have fixed their abode, and where, following their divine Teacher, they are now exhibiting the model of an angelic community. Would he not imagine that Christians must choose their residence any where, rather than in countries, where he sees so much superfluous opulence, luxury, lust, pride, indolence, tyranny, ambition, fraud, envy, anger, discord, quarrels, fightings, battles, wars, tumults, in a word, a more abominable sink of all that Christ condemns, than is to be found among the Turks and the Saracens?

The question then naturally arises, how this pestilence of war first insinuated itself among a Christian people? This evil, like most other evils, made its way by little and little among those who were off their guard. All evil, indeed, either gradually and invisibly creeps into the life of man, or forces its way under the disguise of seeming good.

In the church militant, learning was the first auxiliary engaged to fight for religion. It was a desirable ally, in a contest with heretics, who came to the combat armed with the literature of philosophers, poets, and orators. Indeed, in the earliest ages of Christianity, the professors of it did not arm themselves for defence even with learning, but relied on those converts, who brought the profane knowledge which

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they had acquired before they had gained a knowledge of Christ, to the aid of piety and the Christian cause. Next eloquence, which had rather been concealed at first than despised, came openly forward, and was approved as an auxiliary. In process of time, under the pretence of defeating heretics, the vain ambition of ostentatious disputation crept into the church, and became its bane. The matter proceeded so far, that Aristotle was admitted into the midst of the Christian sanctuary; and admitted so implicitly, that his authority carried with it a sanction paramount to the authority of Christ: for if Christ had said any thing that did not perfectly square with the received modes of conducting life, it was lawful to turn it a little aside by an ingenious comment; but the man did not dare to show his head, who had presumed to oppose, in the slightest manner, the oracular edicts of the Stagirite. From him we learned, that the happiness of man could not be complete without the goods of the body and of fortune. From him we learned that a state could not flourish in which was a Christian equality. Every one of his dogmas we endeavoured to incorporate with the doctrine of Christ, which is much the same as to attempt the commixture of water and fire. We admitted something also from the Roman laws, on account of the apparent equity which they displayed; and that they might agree the better, we forced by violence, as far as we could, the doctrine of the Gospel into a conformity with these laws. But these laws permit us to repel force by force; they allow every one to litigate; they approve of all traffic; they admit of usury, provided it is moderate; they extol war as glorious, provided it is just; and they define that war to be a just war which is declared so by any prince, through the prince be either a child or a fool.

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Lastly; the whole doctrine of Christ was by this time so adulterated by the learning of heathen logicians, sophists, mathematicians, orators, poets, philosophers, and lawyers, that the greatest portion of life was necessarily consumed before time could be found to examine the mysterious learning of the Gospel; to which, though men came at last, they could not but come tinged or prejudiced with so many worldly opinions, that the laws and precepts of Christ either gave offence, or were made to bend to the dogmas preconceived in the schools of heathenism; and this was so far from being disapproved, that it was a crime for a man to speak of evangelical knowledge, who had not plunged, as the phrase is, over head and ears in the nugatory and sophistical nonsense of Aristotle; as if the doctrine of Christ were of that kind which could not be adapted to the lowest degrees of intellect or attainments, or could by any means coalesce with the vain wisdom of mere human philosophy.

After this, Christians admitted among them something of honourable distinctions, offered, indeed, at first as a voluntary tribute, but soon demanded as a debt to merit. So far there appeared nothing unreasonable. The next step was to admit riches; first to be distributed for the relief of the poor, and then for their own private use; and why not? since that methodical arrangement of duties was soon learnt, which suggested that charity begins at home, and that every man is to himself the nearest and dearest neighbour. Nor was a pretext wanting for this deviation from Christian disinterestedness. It was but natural to provide for children, and no more than right to look forward to approaching old age. Why, indeed, should any man, said they, refuse riches if they fall to him honestly? By these grada-

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tions, things came to such a pass, that he at last was thought the best man who was the richest man; nor at any period was greater respect paid to riches among the heathens than at this day among Christians. For what is there, either sacred or profane, which is not governed among them by the despotism of money?

To all these extraneous embellishments or fancied improvements of original Christianity, it was now conceived, that it might not be amiss to add a little power. This also was admitted, but with an apparent moderation. In short, it was admitted upon these terms, that Christians, satisfied with the title and claim to power, should leave the thing itself to others administration. At length, and by insensible degrees, the matter proceeded so far, that a bishop could not believe himself a bishop in earnest, unless he possessed a little particle of worldly power. And the inferior clergy, if beneficed, thought themselves dishonoured, if, with all their holiness, they could not possess at least as much weight and influence as the profane grandees who lorded it over the earth with ungodly rule.

In the ultimate stage of the progress, Christians put a bold face upon the matter, banished every childish blush, and broke down every bar of modesty and moderation. Whatever at any time there has been of avarice, whatever of ambition, whatever of luxury, whatever of pomp and pride, whatever of despotism among the poor heathens; the whole of it, however enormous, the Christians now imitated, equalled, and surpassed.

But to wave more trifling articles, did the heathens, at any period of their history, carry on war either so continually, or more cruelly, than it has been carried on, in all ages, among Christians? How many pitiless storms of war, how many treaties broken, how much



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slaughter and devastation have we seen only within the few years just elapsed? What nation in all Christendom which has not drawn the sword on its neighbour? Christians, after all, revile unbelievers; as if there could be a more pleasing and diverting spectacle to unbelievers, than that which we Christians every day exhibit to them by our mutual slaughter. Xerxes was stark mad when he led on that immense multitude to invade Greece. Could he be otherwise than mad, who sent letters menacing Mount Athos with vengeance, if it should not give way and yield him a passage; who ordered the Hellespont to be whipped with scourges, because it did not smooth its waters to facilitate the transportation of his vessels? Alexander the Great was stark mad: no man ever denied it: he thought himself a demigod, and wished for more worlds to conquer; so ardently did he burn with a feverish thirst for glory. And yet these two persons, whom Seneca does not hesitate to call robbers as well as madmen, conducted war with more humanity than we; conducted war with more good faith; they fought not with weapons so unnaturally, so ingeniously cruel, nor with similar contrivances for mischief, nor on so frivolous pretences, as we, the followers of Jesus Christ. If you review the history of the heathen nations, how many chieftains will you find, who declined engaging in war, by every studied means of reconciliation; who chose rather to win over an enemy by kindness, than to subdue him by arms? Some even preferred the cession of a principality to running the hazard of war. We, Pseudo-Christians, or Christians only in name, eagerly seize every trifle that can possibly serve as an occasion of war. The heathen warriors, before they came to blows, had recourse to conference. Among the Romans, after

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every expedient had been tried in vain to preserve peace, a herald was despatched with many formalities; certain preliminary ceremonies were gone through; and delays thus industriously contrived, to temper the fury of the first onset. And even after this prelude was finished, no soldier durst begin the battle till the signal was given; and the signal was contrived to be given in such a manner, that no one could know the exact time of it, but all waited for it patiently; nor, after the signal was once heard, was it lawful for any man to attack or strike the enemy, who had not taken the military oath. The elder Cato actually sent orders to his own son, who was loitering in the camp, but had not taken the oath, to return to Rome; or, if he chose rather to remain with the army, to ask permission of the general to engage the enemy. As the signal for engagement did not give liberty to fight to any but those who had taken the oath; so, the signal once sounded for retreat immediately deprived every soldier of the liberty to kill a single individual in the enemy's army. The great Cyrus publicly honoured with his praise, a private soldier, who, though he had lifted up his sword to cut down one of the enemy, instantly withdrew it, and spared the foe, on hearing the signal for cessation of battle. This was so ordered by the heathens, in their wars, that no man might imagine himself at liberty to slay a fellow-creature, unless compelled by unavoidable necessity.

Now, among Christians, the man is esteemed a brave fellow, who, meeting one of the nation with whom he is at war in a wood, unarmed, but laden with money; not intending to fight, but endeavouring to make his escape, lest he should be forced to fight; slays him, robs him when slain, and buries him when robbed. Those also are called soldiers who, incited



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with the hope of a little paltry gain, eagerly hasten as volunteers to the battle, ready to bear arms on either side, even against their own kindred and their own prince. Wretches like these, when they return home from such engagements, presume to relate their exploits, as soldiers; nor are punished, as they ought to be, like robbers, traitors, and deserters. Every one holds the common hangman in abhorrence, though hired to do his work, though he only puts to death those who are found guilty, and condemned by the laws of his country; while, at the same time, men who, forsaking their parents, their wives, and their children, rush as volunteers or privateers into the war, not hired, but ambitious to be hired, for the unnatural work of human butchery, shall be received, when they return home, with a heartier welcome than if they had never gone to rob and murder. By such exploits they imagine that they acquire something of nobility. A man is counted infamous who steals a coat; but if the same man goes to the wars, and, after shedding blood, returns from the battle, laden with the property of a great number of innocent men, he is ranked among honest and reputable members of society: and any one among the common soldiers, who has behaved himself with remarkable ferocity, is judged worthy of being made a petty officer in the next war. If therefore we duly consider the humane discipline of the ancient warriors in heathen nations, the wars of Christians will appear, on comparison, to be merely systems of plunder.

And if you contrast Christian monarchs with heathen monarchs in their conduct of war, in how much worse a light will the Christians appear? The kings of the heathens sought not gain, but glory; they took delight in promoting the prosperity of the provinces which they subdued in war; barbarous

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nations, who lived like the brutes, without letters and without laws, they polished and refined by the arts of civilisation; they adorned uncultivated regions by building cities and towns in them; whatever they found unprotected, they fortified; they built bridges, they embanked rivers, they drained swamps, they improved human life, they facilitated and sweetened human intercourse, by a thousand similar accommodations; so that it became in those days of generous heroism, an advantage to have been conquered. How many things are handed down to us by tradition, which they said wisely, or acted humanely and temperately, even in the midst of war. But the military transactions of Christians are too offensive and atrocious to bear particular enumeration. Upon the whole, whatever was the worst part of the conduct of heathens in war, that alone we closely imitate, in that alone we exceed them.

It may now be worth while to observe in what manner Christians defend the madness of war.

If, say they, war had been absolutely unlawful, God would not have excited the Jews to wage war against their enemies. I hear the argument, and observe upon it, that the objector should in justice add, that the Jews scarcely ever waged war, as the Christians do, against each other, but against aliens and infidels. We Christians draw the sword against Christians. To them, a difference in religion, and the worship of strange gods, was the source of contest. We are urged to war either by childish anger, or a hunger and thirst for riches and glory, and oftentimes merely for base and filthy lucre. They fought at the express command of God; we at the command of our own passions. But if we are so fond of the Jewish model as to make their going to war a precedent for us, why do we not, at the same time, adopt

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their practice of circumcision? why not sacrifice cattle? why not abstain from swine's flesh? why not admit polygamy? Since we execrate these practices, why do we pitch upon their warlike actions as the only model for our imitation? Why, lastly, do we follow the letter which killeth, and neglect the spirit of their institutions? To the Jews war was permitted, for the same reason as divorce, because of the hardness of their hearts.

But since the time that Jesus Christ said, put up thy sword into its scabbard, Christians ought not to go to war; unless it be in that most honourable warfare, with the vilest enemies of the church, the inordinate love of money, anger, ambition, and the fear of death. These are our Philistines, these our Nabuchodonosors, these our Moabites and Ammonites, with whom we ought never to make a truce: with these we must engage without intermission, till the enemy being utterly extirpated, peace may be firmly established. Unless we subdue such enemies as these, we can neither have peace with ourselves, nor peace with any one else. This is the only war which tends to produce a real and a lasting peace. He who shall have once conquered foes like these, will never wish to wage war with any mortal man upon the face of that earth, on which God placed all men to live, to let live, and to enjoy the life he gave.

I lay no stress on the opinion of those who interpret the two swords given to Peter to mean two powers, the civil and ecclesiastical, claimed by the successors of Peter, since Christ suffered Peter himself to fall into an error in this matter, on purpose that, when he was ordered to put up his sword, it might remain no longer a doubt, that war was prohibited; which, before that order, had been considered as allowable.

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But Peter, they allege, did actually use his sword. It is true he did; but while he was still a Jew, and had not yet received the genuine spirit of Christianity. He used his sword, not in support of any disputable claim to property; not to defend goods, chattels, lands, and estates, as we do; nor yet for his own life, but for the life of his Lord and Master. Let it also be remembered, that he who used the sword in defence of his master, very soon after denied and renounced that master. If Peter is to be our model, and if we are so much pleased with the example of Peter fighting for Christ, we may probably approve also the example of Peter denying Christ.

Peter, in using his sword, only made a slip in consequence of the impulse of a sudden passion, yet he was reprimanded. But if Christ approved this mode of defence as some most absurdly infer from this transaction, how happens it that the uniform tenour of his whole life and doctrine teaches nothing else but forbearance? Why, when he commissioned his disciples, did he expose them to the despots of the world, armed only with a walking-stick and a wallet —a staff and a scrip? If by that sword, which Christ ordered them, after selling every thing else, to buy, is meant a moderate defence against persecution, as some men not only ignorantly but wickedly interpret it, how came it to pass that the martyrs never used it?

Here it is usual to bring forward the rabbinical limitations, and to say, that it is lawful for a hired soldier to fight, just as it is for a butcher to practise his trade for a livelihood; since the one has served an apprenticeship to the art of killing sheep and oxen, and the other to the art of killing men, both may equally follow their trade in perfect consistence with the character of good and worthy members of

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society, provided always that the war be just and necessary. And their definition of a just and necessary war is as follows:—That is a just and necessary war which, whatsoever it be, howsoever it originates, on whomsoever it is waged, any prince whatever may have thought proper to declare. Priests may not indeed actually brandish the sword of war, but they may be present at, preside over, and superintend by their counsels, all its operations. They would not, indeed, for the world go to war from motives of revenge, but solely from a love of justice, and a desire to promote a righteous cause: but what man alive is there who does not think, or at least maintain, that his own cause is a righteous cause?

Christ, indeed, sent forth his messengers without weapons; but while he was with them, they did not want weapons. When the time of his departure was at hand, he advised them to take a scrip and a sword; a scrip to provide against hunger, and a sword to guard against enemies. These precepts nevertheless, such as, take no thought for the morrow, do good to them that hate you, and the like, remained in full force. If St. Paul and St. Peter give similar admonitions about defence and provision, it must be remembered that they are of the nature of temporary advice only, not of precepts or fixed rules of perpetual and universal obligation. But it is with these occasional admonitions or advice, sophistically represented as everlasting rules, that we feed the ambition of princes, and hold out something with which they flatter themselves that their conduct is justifiable, and reconcileable to the principles of the gospel: and, as if there were danger lest the world should enjoy a repose from the horrors of war, we assert the propriety or expediency of war from the sword, one part only of these words of

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Christ; and, as if we were afraid the avarice of mortals should relax a little of its labours in heaping up riches, we make Christ the adviser and abettor of covetousness, misinterpreting the other part of his words, the scrip, as if he perpetually prescribed, and did not only and merely permit for a particular occasion, what he had before most peremptorily interdicted—when he said, *Do good to them that hate you, and take no thought for the morrow.*

The world had its own laws and its own established practices before the gospel appeared; it punished with death, it waged war, it heaped up pelf, both into the public treasury and into the private coffer; it wanted not to be taught what it already knew and practised. Our Lord did not come to tell the world what enormity was permitted, how far we might deviate from the laws of rectitude, but to show us the point of perfection at which we were to aim with the utmost of our ability.

They, however, who warmly dissuade mankind from war, are suspected of heresy; while they who by artful salvoes and quibbles contrive to dilute the strength of the gospel, and who find out plausible pretexts by which princes may gratify their lust for war and plunder, without appearing to act too openly against gospel principles, are deemed orthodox divines, and teachers of true evangelical religion; whereas a true Christian teacher or preacher never can give his approbation to war; he may, perhaps, on some occasions, connive at it, but not without grief and reluctance.

But they urge, that the laws of nature, the laws of society, and the laws of custom and usage, conspire in dictating the propriety of repelling force by force, and defending life—and money too, which, as Hesiod says, is to some persons as dear as life. So much I

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allow. But gospel grace, of more force than all these laws, declares, in decisive words, that those who revile us, we must not revile again; that we must do good to them who use us ill; that to those who take a part of our possessions, we should give up the whole; and that we should also pray for them who design to take away our lives. All this, they tell us, had a particular reference to the Apostles; but I contend that it also refers to all Christian people, to the whole body, which should be entire and perfect, though one member may have been formerly distinguished by some particular preeminence. The doctrine of Christ can, indeed, have no reference to them, who do not expect their reward with Christ. Let those draw swords for money, for land, and for power, who laugh at Christ's saying, that the poor in spirit were the happy men; that is, that those were the truly rich, who desired none of this world's riches or honours. They who place the chief good in things like these, fight for their lives; but then they are of that description of persons, who are not sensible that this life is a kind of death; and that to the godly there is provided a treasure in heaven, a happy immortality.

They object to us, that there have been Roman pontiffs who authorized war, and took an active part in it. They farther object those opinions or decrees of the fathers, in which war seems to be approved. Of this sort there are some; but they are only among the late writers, who appeared when the true spirit of Christianity began to languish, and they are very few; while, on the other hand, there are innumerable ones among writers of acknowledged sanctity, which absolutely forbid war. Why do the few rather than the many obtrude themselves into our minds? Why do we turn our eyes from Christ to men, and choose

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rather to follow examples of doubtful authority, than an infallible guide, the Author and Finisher of our Faith? The Roman pontiffs were but men; and it may have happened, that they were ill-advised, that they were inattentive, and lastly, that they were not overladen either with wisdom or piety: though, indeed, you will not find, even among such as these, that those kinds of war in which we are continually engaged were countenanced; a point which I could evince by the clearest arguments, if I did not wish to dwell no longer on this part of the debate.

Bernard, indeed, has praised warriors; but praised them in such a manner as to condemn, at the same time, the whole of our war system. But why should I care about the writings of Bernard, or the disputations of Thomas, when I have before my eyes the absolute prohibition of Christ, who, in plain terms, has told us, we must not resist evil; that is to say, not in the manner in which the generality of mankind do resist it, by violence and murder.

But they proceed to argue, that, as it is lawful to inflict punishment on an individual delinquent, it must also be lawful to take vengeance on an offending state. The full answer to be given to this argument would involve me in greater prolixity than is now requisite. I will only say, that the two cases differ widely in this respect: he who is convicted judicially suffers the punishment which the laws impose; but in war, each side treats the other side as guilty, and proceeds to inflict punishment, regardless of law, judge, or jury. In the former case, the evil only falls on him who committed the wrong; the benefit of the example redounds to all: in the latter case, the greatest part of the very numerous evils falls on those who deserve no evil at all; on husbandmen, on old

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people, on mothers of families, on orphans, and on defenceless young females. But if any good at all can be gathered from a thing, (which is itself the worst of all things,) the whole of that good devolves to the share of a few most profligate robbers, to the mercenary pillager, to the piratical privateer, perhaps to a very few generals or statesmen, by whose intrigues the war was excited for this very purpose, and who never thrive so well as in the wreck of the republic. In the former case, one man suffers for the sake of all; in the latter case, in order to revenge or serve the cause of a few, and, perhaps, of one man only, we cruelly afflict many thousand persons who gave no offence, and did no injury. It would be better to let the crime of a few go unpunished, than, while we endeavour to chastise one or two by war, in which, perhaps, we may not succeed, to involve our own people, the neighbouring people, and the innocent part of the enemies, for so I may call the multitude, in certain calamity. It is better to let a wound alone, which cannot be healed without injury to the whole body. But if any one should exclaim, "that it would be unjust that he who has offended should not suffer condign punishment;" I answer, that it is much more unjust, that so many thousand innocent persons should be called to share the utmost extremity of misfortune which they could not possibly have deserved.

In these times, indeed, we see almost every war which breaks out, deriving its origin from some nugatory and obsolete pretence, or from the ambitious confederacies of princes, who, in order to bring some contested petty town under their jurisdiction, lead the whole empire into extreme jeopardy. After all, this petty town, or inconsiderable object, whatever it may be, claimed at the expense of much blood and

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treasure, is sold or ceded at the return of peace. Some one will say, would you not have princes prosecute their just rights? I am sensible that it is not the business of persons like me to dispute too freely upon the rights of princes, which, were it safe, would involve me in a longer discourse than would suit the present occasion. I will only say, that if every claim or disputable title be a sufficient cause for undertaking a war, that it is likely, in the multitudinous changes and chances of human affairs, a claim or disputable title will never be wanting for the purpose. What nation is there that has not been driven from some part of its territories, and which has not in its turn driven others? How often have men emigrated from one quarter to another? How often has the seat of empire been transferred hither and thither, either by chance, or by general consent? Now let the people of modern Padua, for instance, go and claim the territory of Troy, because Antenor, their founder, was a Trojan. Let the modern Romans put in their claim to Africa and Spain, because some of their provinces formerly belonged to the Romans of antiquity, their forefathers.

Add to this, that we are apt to call that dominion, or absolute property, which is only administration, or executive government on trust. There cannot be the same absolute right over men, all free by nature, as there is over cattle. This very right which you possess, limited as it is, was given you by the consent of the people. They who gave, unless I am mistaken, can take away. Now see how trifling a matter to the people is the subject in dispute. The point of contest is, not that this or that state may become subject to a good prince rather than to a bad one; but whether it should be given up as property to the claim of Ferdinand, or to the claim of Sigis-

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mund; whether it should pay tribute to Philip, or to Louis. This is that great and mighty right, for the establishment of which, the whole world is to be involved in one scene of war, confusion, and bloodshed.

But be it so; let this right be estimated as highly as you please; let there be no difference between the right to a man's private farm and to the public state; no difference between cattle bought with your own money, and men, not only born free, but become Christians; yet it would be the part of a wise man to weigh well in his mind, whether this right is of so much value as that he ought to prosecute it, at the expense of that immensity of calamities, which must be brought, by the prosecution of it, on his own people, on those who are placed under his tutelary care, and for whose good he wears the crown.

If, in forming this estimate, you cannot display the generosity of a truly princely character, yet at least show us the shrewdness of a cunning tradesman, that knows and pursues his own interest. The tradesman despises a loss, if he sees it cannot be avoided without a greater loss; and sets it down as clear gain, if he can escape a dangerous risk at a trifling expense.

There is a trite little story that exhibits an example in private life, which it might not be amiss to follow, when the state is in danger of involving itself in war. There were two near relations, who could not agree on the division of some property which devolved to them; neither of them would yield to the other, and there seemed to be no possibility of avoiding a suit at law, and leaving the matter to be decided by the verdict of a jury. Counsel were retained, the process commenced, and the whole affair was in the hands of the lawyers. The cause was just on the point of being brought on, or, in other

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words, war was declared. At this period, one of the parties sent for his opponent, and addressed him to the following purpose:

"In the first place," said he, "it is certainly unbecoming (to speak in the most tender terms of it) that two persons united like us by nature, should be dissevered by interest. In the second place, the event of a law-suit is no less uncertain than the event of war. To engage in it, indeed, is in our own power; to put an end to it, is not so. Now the whole matter in dispute is one hundred pieces of gold. Twice that sum must be expended on notaries, on attornies, on counsellors, on the judges, and their friends, if we go to law about it. We must court, flatter, and fee them; not to mention the trouble of dancing attendance, and paying our most obsequious respects to them. In a word, there is more costs than worship in the business, more harm than good, and therefore I hope this consideration will weigh with you to give up all thoughts of a law-suit. Let us be wise for ourselves, rather than those plunderers; and the money that would be ill-bestowed on them, let us divide between ourselves. Do you give me one moiety from your share, and I will give you the same from mine. Thus we shall be clear gainers in point of love and friendship, which we should otherwise lose; and we shall escape all the trouble. But if you do not choose to yield any thing to me, why then, and in that case, I cheerfully resign the whole to you, and you shall do just as you please with it. I had rather the money should be in the hands of a friend, than in the clutches of those insatiable robbers. I shall have made profit enough by the bargain, if I shall have saved my character, kept my friend, and avoided the plague of a law-suit."

The justice of these remarks, and the good humour

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with which they were made, overcame the adversary. They therefore settled the business between themselves, and left the poor lawyers in a rage, gaping like so many rooks for the prey that had just escaped their hungry maws.

In the infinitely more hazardous concerns of war, let statesmen condescend to imitate this instance of discretion. Let them not view merely the object which they wish to obtain, but how great a loss of good things, how many and great dangers, and what dreadful calamities they are sure of incurring, in trying to obtain it; and if they find, upon holding the scales with an even hand, and carefully weighing the advantages with the disadvantages, that peace, even with some circumstances of injustice, is better than a just war, why should they choose to risk the die of battle? Who, but a madman, would angle for a vile fish with a hook of gold? If they see much more loss than gain in balancing the account, even on the supposition that every thing happens fortunately, would it not be better to recede a little from their strict and rigorous right, than to purchase a little advantage at the high price of evils at once undefined and innumerable? Let the possessors keep their obsolete claims and titles unmolested, if I cannot dispute them without so great a loss of Christian blood! The reigning prince has probably possessed his doubtful right many years; he has accustomed his people to his reins; he is known and acknowledged by them; he is executing the princely functions; and shall some pretender start up, and having found an old title, in antiquated chronicles or musty parchments, go and disturb the state that is quietly settled, and turn every thing, as the phrase is, topsy-turvy? especially, when we see that there is nothing among mortals which remains fixed and

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stable; but every thing in its turn becomes the sport of fortune, and ebbs and flows like the tide. What end can it answer to claim, with such mischievous and tumultuary proceedings, what, after it is claimed and obtained, will soon change hands, and find its way to another claimant, and to some unborn proprietor?

But supposing Christians unable to despise, as they certainly ought, such trifles, yet why, on the breaking out of a dispute, must they rush instantly to arms? The world has so many grave and learned bishops, so many venerable churchmen of all ranks, so many grey-headed grandees, whom long experience has rendered sage, so many councils, so many senates, certainly instituted by our ancestors for some useful purpose; why is not recourse had to their authority, and the childish quarrels of princes settled by their wise and decisive arbitration?

But more respect is paid to the specious language of the princes themselves, who cry out, "Religion is in danger," and that they go to war to defend the church; as if the people at large were not the prince's church; or as if the whole dignity or value of the church consisted in the revenues of the priesthood; or, as if the church rose, flourished, and became firmly established in the world by war and slaughter; and not rather by the blood of the martyrs, by bearing and forbearing, and by a contempt for life, in competition with duty and conscience.

I, for one, do not approve the frequent holy wars which we make upon the Turks. Ill would it fare with the Christian religion if its preservation in the world depended on such support; nor is it reasonable to believe that good Christians will ever be made by such initiation into their religion as force and slaughter. What is gained to the cause by the



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sword, may in its turn be lost by the sword. Would you convert the Turks to Christianity? show them not your riches, your troops of soldiers, your power to conquer, your pretended title to their dominions; but show them the infallible credentials of a Christian, an innocent life, a desire to do good even to enemies, an invincible patience under all kinds of injuries, a contempt for money, a disregard of glory, a life itself little valued; and then point out to them the heaven-taught doctrine which leads to such a conduct, and requires such a life: these are the arms by which unbelievers are best subdued. As we now go on, we engage in the field of battle on equal terms, the wicked with the wicked, and our religion is no better than their own. I will say more, and I wish I said it with greater boldness than truth: if we drop the name of Christians and the banner of the cross, we are no better than Turks fighting against our brother Turks. If our religion was instituted by troops of soldiers, established by the sword, and disseminated by war, then indeed let us go on to defend it by the same means by which it was introduced and propagated. But if, on the contrary, it was begun, established, and disseminated by methods totally different, why do we have recourse, as if we were afraid to rely on the aid of Christ, to the practices of the poor heathens, for succour and defence of the Christian cause?

But the objector repeats, "Why may I not go and cut the throats of those who would cut our throats if they could?" Do you then consider it as a disgrace that any should be wickeder than you? Why do you not go and rob thieves? they would rob you if they could. Why do you not revile them that revile you? Why do you not hate them that hate you?

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Do you consider it as a noble exploit for a Christian, having killed in war those whom he thinks wicked, but who still are men, for whom Christ died, thus to offer up victims most acceptable to the devil, and to delight that grand enemy in two instances; first, that a man is slain at all; and secondly, that the man who slew him is a Christian?

There are many people who, while they set up for better Christians than their neighbours, and wish to appear men of extraordinary zeal and piety, endeavour to do as much evil as they possibly can to an unbelieving nation; and what evil they forbear to inflict, solely because they want the power, they make up for by hearty curses and imprecations; whereas this conduct alone is sufficient to prove any man to be no Christian at all. Others again, desirous of seeming outrageously orthodox, call down the most dreadful curses on the heads of those whom we name heretics, though they themselves prove, by this very conduct, that they are worthier of that appellation. He that would pass for a truly orthodox Christian, must endeavour, by mild methods, and mild methods alone, to reclaim those who err, from the error of their ways, and bring them into the paths of peace.

We spit our spite against infidels, and think, by so doing, that we are perfectly good Christians; perhaps, at the same time, more abominable for the very act, in the sight of God, than the infidels themselves, the objects of our rancour. If the ancient and primitive preachers of the gospel had felt sentiments as bitterly hostile against us before our conversion, as we do against the infidels of our time, where should we have been, who, in consequence of their patience and forbearance, are now existing Christians? Assist the poor infidels in their mis-



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fortune of infidelity; make them, by instruction and example, pious, wherever they are now the contrary; and I will acknowledge your Christian disposition, your benevolent views, and your sound orthodoxy.

There are a great many orders of mendicant monks in the world, who wish to be thought the pillars of the church: how few, among so many thousands, who would risk their lives to propagate the Christian religion! But, say they, they have no hope of success, if they were to attempt it. But I say, there would be the best-grounded hopes of it, if they would bring into action the manners of their founders and ancestors, Dominic and Francis; who, I believe, had an unfeigned contempt for this world, not to dwell upon their truly apostolical lives and conversations. We should not want even miracles, if the cause of Christ now required them. But after all, those who boast themselves to be the vicars and successors of St. Peter, the great institutor of the church, and of the other apostles, place their whole trust in the arm of flesh, in supports merely human, in fleets and in armies alone. These rigid professors of the true religion live in cities flowing with riches, and abandoned to luxury; where they stand a chance of becoming corrupt themselves, rather than of correcting the manners of others; and where there is plenty of pastors to instruct the people, and of priests to sing praises to God. They live in the courts of princes, where they behave in a manner which I shall not at present minutely relate.* They

* The original adds, "Where they are like *canis in balneo*, a *dog in a bath*." This was a proverbial expression, applied to persons who intrude where they are not welcome, or where they stand in the way and are troublesome. It is an ancient Greek proverb, τι κοινον κυνι καὶ βαλανειω; quid cani et balneo? *quadrabit in eos qui ad rem quampiam prorsus sunt inutiles; ut in balneo nullus est omnino canum usus.* We say, *A dog in a church.* CALEPIN.

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hunt legacies, they go in quest of filthy lucre, they make themselves subservient to the purposes of despots; and lest they should appear not to labour in their vocation, they stigmatize erroneous articles of faith, they mark persons who are suspected, who give offence, who are guilty of want of respect to themselves, of heresy and of schism. For they had rather bear rule and possess power, though to the injury of Christ's people, than at the least risk of their own ease or safety, extend the rule, the power, and the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Now those whom we call Turks are in some respects half Christians, and perhaps approach nearer to genuine Christianity than most of ourselves. For how many among us are there who neither believe the resurrection of the body, nor that the soul survives the body's dissolution? and yet, with what vindictive rage do these men, when in authority, rise up to punish some little heretical wretch, who has had the audacity to doubt whether the Roman pontiff has any jurisdiction over the souls that lie in torment in purgatory. Let us first cast the beam out of our own eye, then shall we see to cast the mote out of our brother's eye. The end of the gospel is, to produce morals worthy of the gospel. Why do we urge those points which have no reference to melioration of morals? while, if you take away morals, the pillars of the faith, the whole fabric falls to the ground at once. In fine, who will believe us, while we hold up the cross, and use the name of the gospel, and at the same time our whole life and conversation exhibits nothing but a love of the world? Besides, Christ, in whom there was no failing or defect, did not quench the smoaking flax, nor break the bruised reed, as the prophecy expresses it; but particularly bears with and cherishes whatever is

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imperfect, till it improves and makes gradual advances towards perfection. We are ready to extirpate all Asia and Africa with the sword, though there are many there either almost or altogether Christians, such as we profess ourselves to be: why do we not rather acknowledge the latter, and kindly encourage and improve the former? But if our real intention is only to extend dominion, if we are only opening our voracious jaws to swallow up their riches, why do we add the name of Christ to a purpose so vile, so wicked, and so profane? Is there not a possibility, that while we Christians are attacking these unbelievers by human force alone, the territory allotted to us, in the partition of the globe, may be in danger? How narrow a corner of the world do we possess? What a multitude of foreign enemies do we, so few in number, rashly provoke? But some man will say, "*If God be with us, who shall be against us?*" And that man may very properly say so who relies on such succours, and on such alone, as God affords and approves. But to those who rely on other succours, what will our great Captain Jesus Christ say? He has already said, *He who takes the sword, shall perish by the sword.*

If we are willing to conquer for Christ, let us buckle on the sword of the gospel; let us put on the helmet of salvation, grasp the shield of faith, and be completely clad in apostolical armour, the panoply of heaven. Then will it come to pass, that we shall triumph even in defeat, and when routed in the field, still bear away the palm of a most glorious victory.

But suppose the hazardous chance of war to turn out favourably to us, who ever found that men were made true Christians by fire and sword, bloodshed and plunder? And there is less harm in being openly

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and honestly a Turk or a Jew, than in being an hypocritical, a pretended, a nominal Christian.

Still we must, you say, endeavour to ward off the violence of aggressors from our own heads. But why do we provoke their violence, by fomenting feuds and animosities among ourselves, and widening the breach with them? They will not be very fond of invading us, if we are united at home; and they will sooner be converted to the faith by our kind offices, if their lives are sure of being saved, than if they are harshly treated and threatened with extermination. I prefer an unbeliever in his native colours, to a false Christian painted and varnished over with hypocrisy. It is our business to sow the seed of Christianity, and Christ himself will give the increase. The harvest is plentiful, if the labourers are not few. And yet, in order to make a few pretended Christians of unbelievers, how many good Christians shall we render bad ones, and how many bad ones worse? For what else can be the consequence of wars and tumults? I would not suspect for a moment, which has however often been the case, that a war against an unbelieving nation is made a mere pretext for picking the pockets of Christian people; that thus oppressed by every means, and quite broken down, they may, with more servility, submit their necks to the yoke of despotical rulers, both civil and ecclesiastical. I do not say this with an intent to condemn entirely an expedition against unbelievers, if they attack us unprovoked; but that we may carry on a war, to which we pretend Christ incites us, with such arms as Christ has furnished and approved, to overcome evil with good.

Let the unbelievers be made sensible that they are invited by us to safety and salvation, and not attacked for the purpose of plunder. Let us carry to them

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morals worthy of the gospel; and if we are not qualified, or have no opportunity, to address them with our tongues, let us remember that our lives and our behaviour speak the most forcible language, and the most persuasive eloquence. Let us carry to them a creed or profession of faith, simple, truly apostolical, and not overladen with so many articles superadded by human contrivance. Let us require of them principally those things which are clearly and openly handed down by the sacred volumes, and in the writings of the apostles. The fewer the articles the easier the consent; and union will still more effectually be promoted, if on most of the articles, every one shall be allowed to put what construction he pleases, provided he does not enter into a controversy that breaks the public peace.

It is a truth to be lamented rather than denied, that if any one examines the matter carefully and faithfully, he will find almost all the wars of Christians to have originated either in folly or in wickedness: First, in folly; as for instance, young men born to rule, totally unacquainted themselves and the world about them, have been inflamed with the love of martial glory, by the bad examples of their forefathers, and the silly stories of heroes, as they are called, in which foolish writers have trumpeted the fame of foolish princes. Raw striplings like these, upon thrones thus inflamed with false glory in the first instance; and in the next, instigated by surrounding flatterers, stimulated by lawyers and divines; bishops themselves either assenting or conniving, perhaps even requiring them to go and take the sword as a duty incumbent; such as these, engage in war with all the rashness of folly, rather than the malignity of intentional guilt. They at last buy experience, which costs the world very dear, and find

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that war is a thing which above all things they ought to have avoided. A secret grudge urges one fool, ambition another, native cruelty and ferocity of disposition a third, to the horrid work of war. Our Iliad, or history of war, like Homer's Iliad, contains, as Horace says, nothing but a history of the wrath of silly kings, and of people as silly as they. Next, as I said, our wars arise from wickedness.

There are kings who go about to war for no other reason, than that they may with greater ease establish despotic authority over their own subjects at home. For in time of peace, the power of parliaments, the dignity of magistrates, the vigour of the laws, are great impediments to a prince who wishes to exercise arbitrary power. But when once a war is undertaken, the chief management devolves to a few, who call themselves the ministers of executive government; and who, for the general safety, assume the privilege of conducting every thing according to their own humour, demanding unlimited confidence from the people, and the profoundest secresy. These persons, in such a conjuncture, who are the prince's favourites, are exalted to places of honour and profit; and those whom the prince dislikes are turned off and neglected, as forming a dangerous opposition. Now is the time for raising as much money as their hearts can wish. In short, now is the time, when they feel that they are monarchs not in name only, but in very deed and truth, monarchs with a vengeance! In the mean time, the leaders play into one another's hands, till they have eaten up the poor people root and branch. Do you think that men of such dispositions would be backward to seize any, the slightest occasion of war, so lucrative, so flattering to avarice and ambition?

In the mean time we give our evil disposition a

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plausible name. For instance, I long for some of the Turk's riches, and I cloak my real motive by calling it a zeal for the defence of religion. I burn with hatred and malice, and I cloak them with a pretended regard for the rights of the church. I mean only to gratify my ambition and anger, or I am hurried on by the impetuosity of my own temper; but I take care to allege as a cause for taking up arms, that some treaty has been broken, some of my allies injured or insulted, some contract not performed, or any other paltry, yet colourable pretence for a rupture.

After all, it is surprising to think how these persons are disappointed in the real objects of their hearts; and while they are striving by wrong methods to shun this or that evil, fall into another, or even the same evil rendered still worse. For if they are led on by the love of glory, is it not much more glorious to save than to destroy, to build than to demolish? Then, though every thing should succeed most prosperously in war, yet how small a pittance of glory falls to the prince's share? The people, whose money pays for it all, certainly claim a just part of the glory; the foreign soldier, hired for the business of the battles, demands a still greater; the generals some of it, and fortune the largest portion of all; for she has great influence in all human affairs, so more particularly does she domineer in all the events of war.

Now, if greatness of mind, as you pretend, stimulates to war, consider how little consistent is the conduct you pursue, with so noble a quality. For while this greatness of mind forbids you to yield to some individual, perhaps a neighbouring prince, perhaps related to you by marriage, perhaps one who has deserved well of you formerly; how abject a suppliant

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you make yourself, while you condescend to solicit the auxiliary aid of barbarians against him; and what is baser still, the cooperation of men polluted with every kind of flagitiousness; if brutes, like them, deserve to retain the appellation of men; while you condescend to promise, to flatter, and cajole, a set of abandoned wretches, murderers and thieves, by whom the measures of war are principally carried into execution? While you wish to bully your equal, you are obliged to fawn and cringe to the lowest wretches, the offscouring and dregs of the human race. While you are endeavouring to extrude a neighbour from his proper dominions, you are obliged to admit into your own realm the basest tribe of knaves and varlets. You will not trust yourself to a relation by marriage; but you hesitate not to resign your cause into the hands of armed banditti.

As to your safety, how much safer would you be, by establishing and preserving concord? If gain is your object, take your pen and ink, and make the calculation. I give you leave to adopt war, if it shall not appear, on a fair calculation, that you are in pursuit of an uncertain profit, at a certain loss not to be estimated; in pursuit of a profit not only less in amount than the certain loss, but also doubtful whether it will ever be obtained at all. But you are consulting the welfare of the state, not your own: let me tell you, that states are ruined in no way so expeditiously, and so much without remedy, as by war. Before you have struck a stroke, you have hurt your country more than you will ever do it good, even if your efforts should be crowned with victory. You exhaust the wealth of your people, you multiply houses of mourning, you fill all the country with robbers, thieves, and violators of innocence. Such

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are the fruits reaped in the harvest of war, such the blessed effects it leaves behind it.

If you really love your subjects, your whole people, the individuals as well as the aggregate, how happens it that the following reflections do not arise in your mind? Why should I expose those young men of mine, flourishing in health and strength, to every kind of disaster? Why should I pursue a course likely to deprive so many worthy women of their husbands, so many innocent children of their fathers? Why should I assert some obsolete claim, which I scarcely recognise myself; some very doubtful right, with the blood of those who are trusted, like children, to my protection? In a war, undertaken under the pretence of defending the church, I have seen the churchmen themselves so stript by repeated contributions, that no enemy could possibly have treated them with more effectual hostility: so that while we foolishly endeavour to avoid falling into a pit, we precipitate ourselves into it headlong of our own accord. While we cannot put up with a slight injury, we subject ourselves to the greatest injury, still farther aggravated by the grossest insult. While we scorn to pay due deference to some prince, our equal, we render ourselves obsequious suitors to the lowest of the human race. While by silly conduct we aspire at freedom, we entangle ourselves in the nets of the basest slavery. While we are greedily hunting after a paltry pittance of gain, we involve ourselves and our people in losses beyond estimation.

It is the part of a sensible man of the world to give these things due consideration; of a Christian, who is truly such, to shun, deprecate, and oppose, by every lawful means, a business so hellish, so

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irreconcileable both to the life and to the doctrine of Christ.

If war cannot by any means be avoided, on account of the wickedness of the bulk of mankind, then, after you shall have left no stone unturned to avoid it, after you shall have sought peace by every mode of negotiation, the next desirable point will be, to take the greatest care that the execution of a bad business may be chiefly consigned to bad men; and that it may be put an end to with as little loss as possible of human blood. For if we endeavour to be what we are called, that is, to be violently attached to nothing worldly, to seek nothing here with too anxious a solicitude; if we endeavour to free ourselves from all that may incumber and impede our flight to heaven; if we aspire with our most ardent wishes at celestial felicity; if we place our chief happiness in Christ alone,—we have certainly, in so doing, made up our minds to believe, that whatever is truly good, truly great, truly delightful, is to be found in his religion. If we are convinced that a good man cannot be essentially hurt by any mortal; if we have duly estimated the vanity and transitory duration of all the ridiculous things which agitate human beings; if we have an adequate idea of the difficulty of transforming, as it were, a man into a god; of being so cleansed, by continual meditation, from the pollutions of this world, that when the body is laid down in the dust, one may emigrate to the society of angels: in a word, if we exhibit these three qualities, without which no man can deserve the appellation of a Christian; innocence, that we may be free from vice; charity, that we may deserve well of all men; patience, that we may bear with those who use us ill, and, if possible, bury injuries by an accumulation of

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benefits on the injured party; I ask what war can possibly arise hereafter for any trifles which the world contains?

If the Christian religion be a fable, why do we not honestly and openly explode it? Why do we glory and take a pride in its name? But if Christ is both the way, and the truth, and the life, why do all our schemes of life and plans of conduct deviate so from this great exemplar? If we acknowledge Christ to be our Lord and Master, who is Love itself, and who taught nothing but love and peace, let us exhibit his model, not by assuming his name, or making an ostentatious display of the mere emblematic sign, his cross, but by our lives and conversation. Let us adopt the love of peace, that Christ may recognise his own, even as we recognise him to be the teacher of peace. Let this be the study of pontiffs, princes, and of whole nations. By this time there has been enough Christian blood spilt in war; we have given pleasure enough to the enemy of the Christian name: but if the people, the rude and uninstructed people, are still disposed to riot and tumult, to disorder and war, let them be restrained by their own respective princes, who ought to be, in the state, what the eye is in the body, and reason in the soul. Again, if princes themselves breed confusion, and violate peace, undoubtedly it is the duty of pontiffs and bishops, by their wisdom and authority, to tranquillize the commotion. Satiated with everlasting wars, let us indulge at length a longing after peace.

The greatness of the calamity itself urges us to seek peace, and ensue it; the world, wearied out with woes, demands it; Christ invites to it; the great pontiff, Leo the Tenth, exhorts to it; he, who, from his pacific disposition, may be deemed the true representative of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ;

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he who is a lamb to injure the innocent, but a lion against all that opposes true piety; all whose wishes, all whose counsels, all whose labours, tend to this one point; that those who are bound together by one common faith may be closely cemented in one common charity. The scope of all his endeavours is, that the church may flourish, not in riches, not in power, but in its own appropriate excellencies and endowments: A most glorious undertaking; and every way worthy a man so truly great,—descended from the celebrated family of the Medici; a family by whose political wisdom the famous state of Florence flourished in a long continued peace; and whose enlightened generosity has ever afforded protection to all the fine and liberal arts which embellish human life.

Blessed by nature with a mild and gentle disposition, he was initiated, at the earliest age, in polite letters, the studies of humanity, the cultivation of poetry, and in all those arts which have so powerful an influence in softening and meliorating the sentiments of the heart. Thus educated among men of the first character for learning, and nursed, as it were, in the lap of the Muses, he brought with him a blameless life, a reputation unspotted, though in the midst of a licentious city like Rome, to the supreme pontificate. Upon this high and honourable office he by no means obtruded himself; he had not the least expectation of possessing it; but seems to have been nominated to it by the voice of God, that he might bring relief to a suffering world, distressed and harassed, as it was, by the unceasing tempest of war.

Let his predecessor, Julius, enjoy all the glory of war, let him boast his unenvied victories, let him engross all the honour of his magnificent triumphs;

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all which, how very little they become a Christian pontiff, it is not for persons in my humble station to pronounce: but this I will venture to say; his glory, however great, was founded on the sorrows, the sufferings, and the destruction of multitudes. Infinitely more glory will redound to our Leo, from the restoration of peace to the world, than to Julius,*

* This holy and infallible pontiff, as well as glorious warrior, is thus characterised in a dialogue intitled Julius, which many attributed to Erasmus, but which he disavowed. "Fuit Julius, homo palàm, scelerosus, temulentus, homicida, simoniacus, veneficus, perjurus, rapax, portentosis, libidinum generibus undique conspurcatus; denique Scabie, quam vocant, Gallicâ, totus cooperatus." He proposed a decree to transfer the kingdom of France, and the title of Most Christian Majesty, to the king of England, whom he had excited to war with France. "Gallos omnes hostilem in modum cruciandos interficiendosque curavit: Præmium etiam percussoribus pollicitus est, peccatorum omnium veniam et impunitatem, si quis vel unicum Gallum quoquo modo trucidaret.***** tanto dolore atque iracundiâ exarsit, ut non modò Gallis omnibus aquâ et igne interdiceret, verum etiam obvium quemque mactari trucidarique imperaret; Præmiis etiam, ut dixi, sicarios ac percussores invitaret."

HOTMAN. *Brutum Fulmen*, p. 109, 110,

"He endeavoured to cause all *Frenchmen* whatever to be put to the torture, and to death, as enemies: he offered a reward to all gentlemen assassins by profession; publicly notifying, that he would grant remission of all past sins, and pardon for this particular act, to any man who should butcher any Frenchman whatever, nay, though it were but one, in any manner******. He was so inflamed with anger and revenge against the French nation, that he not only laid all Frenchmen under an interdict, but issued an order, that whoever met a Frenchman in his way, should kill him, and cut him to pieces. He also invited, as I have already said, assassins and cut-throats, by the offer of rewards, remission of sins, &c." But God, in mercy to mankind, took the monster out of the world, before he could execute all he intended. His holiness had destroyed his constitution by drunkenness and an impure disease.

There have appeared in better times, pamphlets, newspapers, speeches, manifestoes, and sermons, which breathe a spirit against

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from all his wars, all over Christendom, however valiantly excited, and fortunately conducted.

Frenchmen almost as catholic as the decrees and orders of his holiness. If Erasmus had not lived, there might have been other Juliuses. He has delivered us from the curse of popery; may he deliver us from those of offensive war! And let all the people say AMEN.

END OF VOLUME THE FIFTH.



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